

THE GREEKS TRIUMPHANT



BALKAN WAR 1912-1913



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THE GREEKS TRIUMPHANT



THE KING OF THE HELLENES.

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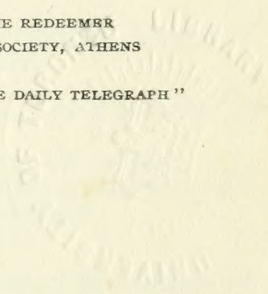
THE GREEKS TRIUMPHANT

BY

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ETC. ETC.

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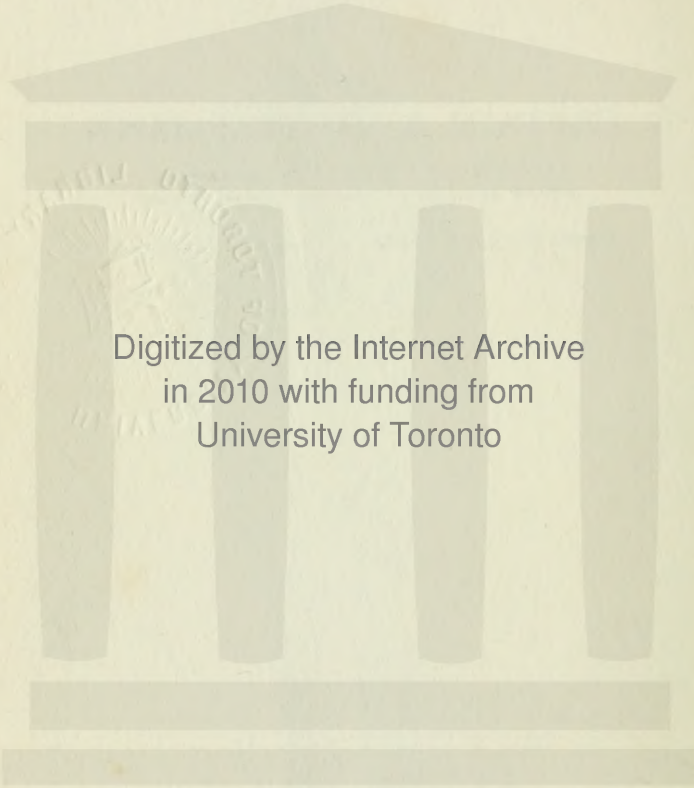
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DEDICATION

To

THE OFFICERS, NON-COMMISSIONED OFFICERS AND MEN
OF THE GREEK ARMY.

I who have shared your hunger and thirst and know how bitter were
they,

I who have seen you at your worst and best by night and day,
In an alien tongue, to a race far-flung I will tell of the deeds ye did,
Of your straight-fought fight in the cause of right
Lest the truth and your worth be hid !

I who have stood in your battle-line and watched the deaths ye died,
And was proud to make your danger mine, swept on by your charging
tide,

I will take pen and write of the men and the noble deeds that were done ;
Tho' I may not share the laurels ye wear
I may tell how those laurels were won !

A. H. T.

PREFACE

IN view of the present world-wide war, it seems unlikely that the Greek campaigns of 1912 and 1913 will attract the attention of the outside world for many years to come, but it appears to me that both from the political and the military point of view they are deserving of study, nor are they devoid of interest for the ordinary reader.

Never before has a war correspondent had the privileges accorded to him that were accorded to me, nor is it likely that in the future correspondents will have the same facilities. As a soldier I have tried to point a few lessons from my experiences, as a journalist I have endeavoured to render these pages interesting: should they succeed in arousing some sympathy in the English-speaking world for a very gallant and patriotic people who for many centuries have successfully struggled for independence against overwhelming odds, I shall feel that I have not written in vain.

The future is on the knees of the gods, but it is to be hoped that when Europe emerges from the melting-pot the statesmen who draft the new map will have sufficient perspicacity, so far as Balkania is concerned, to render unto Cæsar such people as are Cæsar's. Greece and Italy are both rejuvenated countries whose star is in the ascendant, and if a period of prolonged peace is to follow the days of Armageddon then a place in the sun must be found for these two countries, who must eventually share *or dispute* with England and France the supremacy

of the Mediterranean. The civilisation of Ancient Greece was a priceless legacy to Europe: I firmly believe that the friendship of modern Greece, the Greece that is yet to be made manifest, will, half a century hence, prove an inestimable asset for those nations who know how to secure it.

A. H. T.

"SOMEWHERE," *July* 1915.

CONTENTS

PART I

THE CAMPAIGN IN EPIRUS

| CHAPTER | PAGE |
|---|------|
| I. A THOUSAND YEARS OF BALKAN HISTORY . | 3 |
| II. FIRST IMPRESSIONS | 8 |
| III. THE OPPOSING FORCES IN EPIRUS . . | 14 |
| IV. EARLY DAYS AT ARTA | 20 |
| V. THE BATTLE OF GRIMBOVO-KUMUZADES . | 27 |
| VI. LIFE AT ARTA | 33 |
| VII. BATTLE OF NIKOPOLIS AND FALL OF PREVEZA | 39 |
| VIII. THE GREEK MEDICAL SERVICE | 46 |
| IX. PENTEPIGARDIA | 53 |
| X. DAYS OF PREPARATION. HEADQUARTERS MOVE TO PHILIPPIAS | 62 |
| XI. THE BATTLE OF PESTA (DECEMBER 12TH, 1912) | 69 |
| XII. IN FRONT OF BIZANI | 82 |
| XIII. THE ACTIONS OF MANOLIASSA AND EYTORAKI (DECEMBER 14TH, 15TH, 16TH, 17TH), WITH MENTION OF THE ACTION AT DRISKOS (DECEMBER 9TH) | 90 |

| CHAPTER | PAGE |
|---|------|
| XIV. THE POLICY OF AVRIO | 97 |
| XV. THE GENERAL ACTION: JANUARY 7TH (O.S.) —20TH (N.S.) | 106 |
| XVI. ARRIVAL OF THE CROWN PRINCE (JANU- ARY 23RD) AND FALL OF JANNINA (MARCH 6TH) | III |
| XVII. THE CONQUERED CITY | 120 |
| XVIII. EPIRUS AND ALBANIA, WITH SOME GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS OF POLICY | 126 |
| XIX. GREECE AND SEA POWER IN THE MEDITER- RANEAN | 134 |
| ENVOI TO PART I | 139 |

PART II

*THE THIRTY DAYS' CAMPAIGN IN MACEDONIA
(GRECO-BULGARIAN WAR, JULY 1913)*

| | |
|---|-----|
| I. CAUSES OF THE WAR | 143 |
| II. THE BATTLE OF THE STREETS OF SALONIKA | 155 |
| III. THE BATTLES OF KILKIS AND LACHANAS | 161 |
| IV. NIGRITTA—THE BLACK CITY | 172 |
| V. THE AFTERMATH OF GREAT BATTLES | 187 |
| VI. THE LULL BEFORE THE STORM | 197 |
| VII. THE ADVANCE UP THE STRUMA VALLEY | 205 |
| VIII. CAVALLA | 213 |
| IX. THE MASSACRES OF SERRES AND DOXAT | 220 |

CONTENTS

xi

| CHAPTER | PAGE |
|--|------|
| X. THE KRESNA PASS | 229 |
| XI. THE BATTLE OF SEMITLI | 236 |
| XII. IN FRONT OF DJUMAIA | 244 |
| XIII. SOME OF THE BATTLES OF THE WAR | 250 |
| XIV. THE KING AND HIS GENERALS | 261 |
| XV. THE MILITARY AND POLITICAL ASPECTS OF THE WAR | 269 |
| XVI. FACTS, FIGURES AND FANCIES | 276 |
| ENVOI TO PART II | 279 |

APPENDIXES

| | |
|--|-----|
| I. RÉSUMÉ OF EVENTS IN OTHER THEATRES OF WAR (OCTOBER 17TH, 1912, TO JULY 1ST, 1913) | 281 |
| II. MILITARY LESSONS OF THE TWO WARS | 285 |

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

| | |
|---|---------------------|
| H.M. THE KING OF THE HELLENES . . . | <i>Frontispiece</i> |
| | FACING PAGE |
| GREEK WOUNDED PATIENTLY AWAITING ADMISSION TO HOSPITAL | 48 |
| COLONEL FOUADD BEY | 70 |
| ATHENIAN LADY NURSES AT PHILIPPIAS | 83 |
| THE AUTHOR'S WINTER HOME | 83 |
| GREEK CHAUFFEUR DISTRIBUTING BREAD TO STARVING TURKISH PRISONERS | 123 |
| YANNINA AFTER THE SURRENDER | 123 |
| THE SOLE SURVIVOR OF NIGRITTA | 183 |
| TURKISH HAREM SEEKING GREEK PROTECTION | 183 |
| TURKS CARRYING GREEK WOUNDED | 183 |
| THE KING'S HEADQUARTERS AT KILINDIR | 204 |
| THE MUEZZIN OF ELASSONA | 204 |
| THE KING'S "PALACE" AT LIVONOVO | 209 |
| A GREEK CAMP IN MACEDONIA | 210 |
| THE RUSH OF TROOPS FOR WATER | 210 |
| THE TOWN OF SERRES AFTER THE BULGARIAN RETREAT | 225 |
| GREEK FIELD GUN IN ACTION | 227 |
| MASSACRED VILLAGERS AT DOXAT | 227 |
| M. VENIZELOS: THE GREEK PREMIER | 268 |

LIST OF MAPS

| | FACING PAGE |
|---|--------------------------|
| BATTLE OF GRIMBOVO-KUMUZADES | 28 |
| BATTLE OF NIKOPOLIS AND FALL OF PREVEZA | 40 |
| BATTLE OF PENTEPIGARDIA | 55, 57 |
| BATTLE OF PESTA | 72 |
| GENERAL MAP: JANUARY 20, 1913 | <i>In pocket at back</i> |
| GENERAL MAP: MACEDONIAN CAMPAIGN | ,, ,, |
| GENERAL MAP OF THE THEATRE OF WAR | ,, ,, |

THE CHANT OF THE EVZONE

Dedicated by permission to
HIS MAJESTY KING CONSTANTINE OF GREECE

I

Over the crests of the endless hills
Where the wind-driven snow-clouds lie
I tramped—so long as my strength held out,
Then I laid me down to die,
I could see no hope in the heavens above,
No help on the earth below,
So I shrouded myself in my thread-worn coat
And, shivering, sank in the snow,
I tightened my belt as the hunger bit,
And I slaked my thirst with ice,
I took my last look at the corpse-crowned ridge
That we had assaulted twice,
I thought that my woes on earth were done
And I was *not* sorry to go,
When shrill and clear
Through the frozen air
I heard a bugle blow
Tara-ta!
I heard our bugles blow!

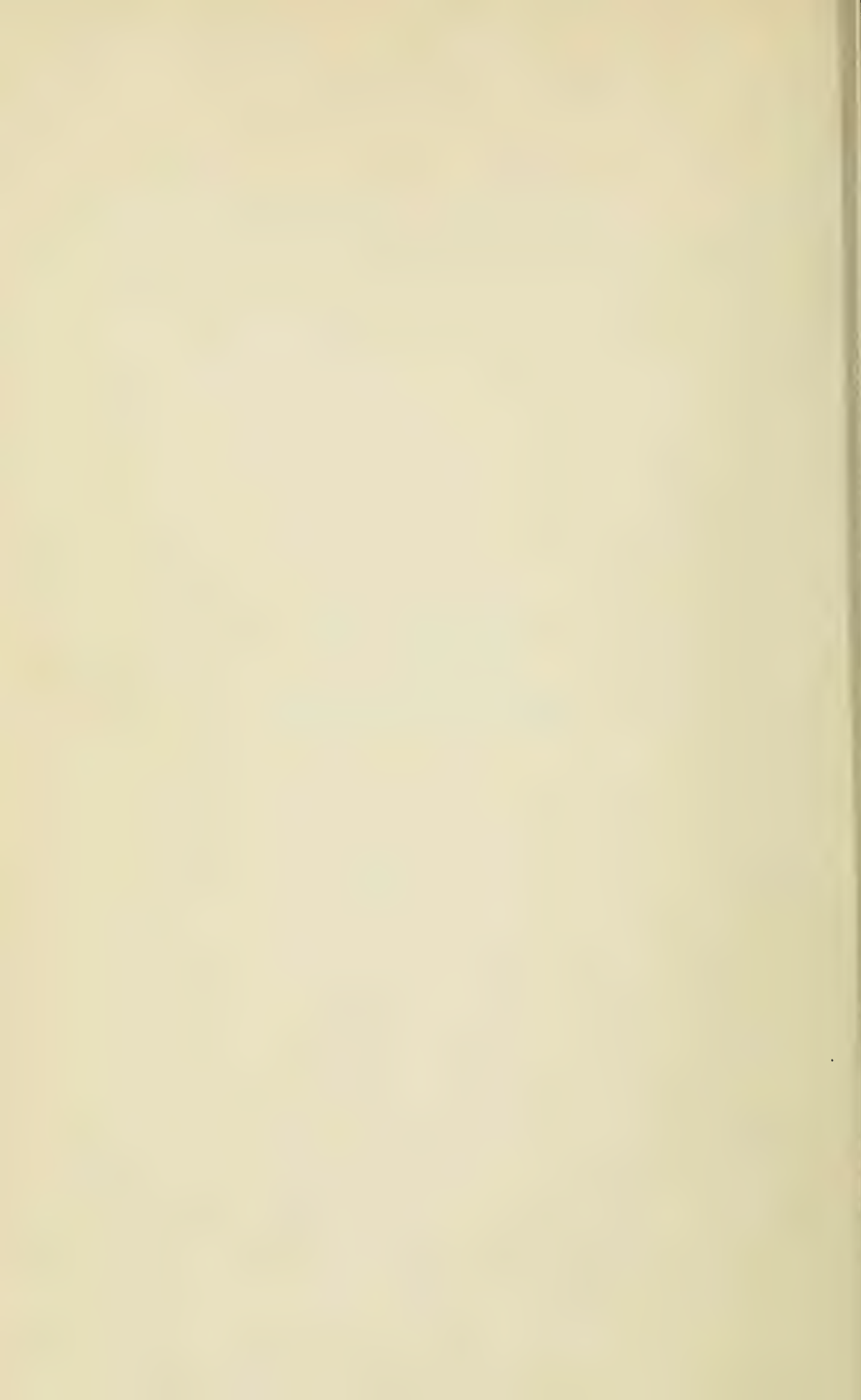
II

If ye've felt the joy of a bayonet thrust
Crash home at an arm's full length,
If ye've felt the spur of a cry for help
In the pride of your manhood's strength,
If ye've felt the glow of a homely hearth
When your limbs were numb with cold,
If ye've felt the stir of a passionate love
When ye fancied your heart too old,
If ye've seen the sun, thro' a rift in the clouds,
Bring peace to a storm-swept sea—
By the favour of God ye may hope to know
What those bugles meant to me.
No, I cannot speak of the song they sang
(There are things too sacred to tell),
But the *red* blood flows
When the bugle blows,
And I followed the bugle to Hell,
Tara-ta!
We *all* followed the bugles to Hell.

A. H. T.

WRITTEN IN FRONT OF BIZANI (YANNINA DEFENCES),
Jan. 20th, 1913.

PART I
THE CAMPAIGN IN EPIRUS



CHAPTER I

A THOUSAND YEARS OF BALKAN HISTORY

OF recent years Greece has not been much in the public eye, which fact possibly accounts for the ignorance that prevails in this country concerning all things connected with Hellas, so that when the Balkan war broke upon an incredulous Europe, in October 1912, the encyclopædia and the atlas were much in demand by those people who desired to follow the course of the war with some modicum of intelligence and understanding. Unfortunately, the existing books of reference which deal with the Balkan Peninsula are not particularly well informed, the majority of the information contained therein being out of date, whilst quite an appreciable amount of Balkan literature is biassed by the nationality or the partiality of the individual author. It must be borne in mind that for several years past some Balkan States have been carrying on a fairly extensive propaganda in their own interests. Bulgaria and Austria have not been idle in their attempts to twist unreliable statistics so as to suit their own political ends.

It is not my intention in this volume to lay before the reader an account of the various political moves which eventually led the four Allies to hurl themselves united upon the Turkish armies, because sufficient time has not yet passed to enable one to obtain the true facts, whilst on the other hand the events are so recent that every reader of the daily papers can still recollect the salient features of the diplomatic situation which eventually gave birth to the Balkan Alliance. It is, however, essential that the reader should be reminded of the principal events in Balkan history in order that a general impression of the feelings of the Balkan peoples may be

formed ; thus only is it possible to understand, and even to sympathise with, the ambitions of the various nations, their jealousies, their fears, and their mutual distrust of each other.

For a few paragraphs, therefore, I propose to dip into ancient history, without the guiding light of which the Balkan problem seems even more complicated and inexplicable than it really is. First and foremost, in the early days of classic Greece, when Greek and Persian battled for the supremacy of the civilised world, Greece, seeking an outlet for her teeming population, found what she sought in the fertile plains of Macedonia and the beautiful valleys of Epirus. Such few original inhabitants as existed were either pushed northward or merged themselves into the conquering race ; thus Epirus and Macedon became in time as Greek in character and language as the older states of Attica and Lakedemon. In the meanwhile Greek colonies had sprung up along the coast of Thrace, and such is the tenacity of the Greek national character that wherever Greek stock planted itself in the centuries preceding the Christian Era the population remain Greek to this day. The conquests of Alexander the Great and the glories of the Byzantine Empire were but temporary attempts of the Greek people to subjugate and absorb alien races, attempts which history has doomed to failure ; but where the original Greek stock was planted in alien soil it has remained Greek in every characteristic throughout the intervening centuries and despite subjugation to an alien yoke.

After the fall of the Byzantine Empire Bulgaria enjoyed a comparatively short period of expansion towards the south and west, colonising portions of Thrace and Macedonia, until she in her turn fell beneath the sway of the Czar of Servia, who towards the middle of the fourteenth century ruled over practically the whole of the Balkan Peninsula. It was the Turks who broke the power of the rising Servian Empire, and Servia, who had fought victoriously against the Roman Empire and the Byzantine Empire, found herself a vassal of the Turk.

With such a history it is easy to understand how the debatable territories of Albania, Macedonia, and Thrace,

are now claimed by each and all of the three Balkan allies for their own, and when we call to mind the more recent history of these states we can fathom to some extent their mutual distrust and hatred. It is not so very long ago that the Servian armies were crushed by the Bulgarians, and the action of the Bulgarian Church in breaking away from the Greek Patriarchate at Constantinople only tended to increase the racial hatred between Greek and Bulgar. Again, still more recently, the intricate history of the Bulgar and Greek bands destroying each other in Macedonia has added fuel to the fire of mutual distrust and mutual recriminations. It remains only to consider for a while the Albanian question to complete this outline of racial characteristics in the peninsula. From the earliest days of European history, Illyria, now called Albania, has managed to keep itself more or less intact under successive conquerors. The Albanian was probably one of the original inhabitants of the Balkan Peninsula, and since he has never been educated, or imbued with any ambition to conquer his neighbours, and since also he inhabits a country where military operations on anything approaching a big scale are practically impossible, he has never been a conqueror, nor yet has he ever been entirely subservient to those who have conquered him.

As a race the Albanian is essentially martial, but he lacks the idea of cohesive nationality, the ambition of self-government. Albania is not a country, but rather a series of small countries where every kingdom is a nation to itself, and where the nearest mountain range forms the horizon of national ambition. For three thousand years the Albanian has never been possessed by a nobler ambition than that of robbing his neighbour. Albania is a backwater of the Levant, untouched by the tide of any civilisation. From time to time various religious creeds have invaded the mountain fastnesses of this wild country of irresponsible bandits, but no creed has claimed the people for its own. They are as divided as regards their beliefs as they are as regards their politics and their language. In all the history of the races of the world there is no parallel to Albania. It is merely a series of valleys inhabited by semi-civilised bandits,

without education, without cohesion or the least ambition for national existence or legislation. At rare intervals throughout its history men have arisen such as Skanderbeg and Ali Pasha, who so long as they lived have managed to weld this conglomeration of warlike tribesmen into some semblance of a nation in arms, but invariably the death of the individual has been the signal for the disintegration of the country into its elemental entities. There is nothing in the Albania of to-day to give the least vestige of hope that she possesses one single qualification or desire to become an autonomous self-governing state. It happens to suit Europe to endeavour to create the impossible, but it is seldom in the history of the world that a state which has not had sufficient homogeneity to create itself has proved itself worthy of nationalisation. Albania as a kingdom is a figment of the imagination of European diplomats; as a figment it will live for a few short years until the politics of Europe permit it to disintegrate itself anew.

The yoke of the Turk has sat lightly on Albania, but it has weighed over-heavily upon the Greeks of Epirus, and upon the Greek, the Serb and the Bulgar in Macedonia and Thrace. The history of the past century is a history of abortive and sanguinary risings against the Ottoman Power. Rebellion and repression have ridden through the land unbridled; fire and sword have done their work only too well, with the result that the country has been wellnigh depopulated. The two factors which were common to Greek, Serb and Bulgar were Christianity and a common hatred of the Turk. Political complications in the Ottoman Empire appeared to offer a favourable opportunity of throwing off the Turkish yoke. The war with Italy was watched with feverish anxiety, the while diplomats strove to induce the Balkan States to forget their mutual quarrels and jealousies, and to join together in one combined effort to oust the Turk from Europe. The Bulgo-Servian treaty in the early summer of 1912 was the first step; soon after Montenegro and Greece came into line; but just when the four Allies were ready to make war they found Italy ready to make peace with Turkey. This upset calculations. The whole situation had to be reconsidered *de novo*. The strategical

and political situation was materially altered. The Balkan allies had builded upon a factor which no longer existed: the hostility of Italy to Turkey. Then Italy and Turkey made peace.

For a moment counsels were divided. The autumn was wellnigh over, and the bitter winter of Balkania was not a pleasant prospect for the belligerents to contemplate. It was left to hardy Montenegro to throw down the gauntlet of war, whilst at Sofia and Athens the advisability of postponing the campaign until the spring was being considered. Montenegro's action, combined with a Turkish mobilisation, clinched the matter. Immediate war became inevitable. That this was so was common knowledge throughout Balkania, but even whilst mobilisation proceeded apace Europe still hoped for peace. Never were the chancelleries of Europe, or the editors of the great European newspapers so ill-served by their representatives. Turkey herself did not realise her danger, and a few days before the declaration of war she allowed all her soldiers who had completed their third year of service to leave the colours, thus losing for ever the services of one-third of her trained men, and the best-trained third to wit. Whatever we may think of the Balkan Alliance, we are bound to admit that they kept their secret well, and that they played their cards with masterly discretion and absence of braggadocio.

CHAPTER II

FIRST IMPRESSIONS

IT was on board the Austrian liner destined to carry me to Patras that I obtained my first insight into the character of the modern Greek. The fine vessel was crowded to overflowing with all kinds and conditions of Greeks rushing homeward ; I was told, as we left Brindisi, that we carried three times the number of passengers for which we had accommodation, but luckily the weather was delightful and I found sleeping on deck a pleasant necessity. Queen Olga of Greece, who was one of our passengers, soon found herself the centre of an improvised court of Athenian ladies who were hastening back from their annual summer visits to London, Paris, Vienna or Munich ; for feminine Athens finds it more economical to do most of its shopping abroad, in view of the crushing customs dues paid by the wholesale importer of merchandise into Greece. The remainder of the saloon passengers were mostly wealthy Greek merchants and men established in business houses on the continent, who were hastening back to the mother country to place their fortunes and their services at her disposal. The second-class was mostly crowded with Greek students and younger professional men, who were interrupting their studies in France, Germany and Austria, to obey the mobilisation summons ; whilst the steerage carried a round battalion of men of all ages from every country in Europe, some coming because they had been summoned, others because they desired to volunteer.

With such a freight of patriots, and at such a time, one might have expected a constant and eager babble of conversation, of questionings, of hopes and fears : remembering that the Greeks are a Southern nation, I

looked for much excitement, but I found it not; the prevailing spirit was a deep calm. I felt that these people knew only too well the meaning of war, its privations and its horrors, but that they were returning to face it all at the call of duty. I have travelled in my time with Spaniard, French, Italian, Russian and English, when the threat or the actuality of war has called men back to serve their country; I have seen the light of battle, the joy of anticipated sport, the Southerners' delight in a new sensation, the unreasoning optimism and pride of the patriot, the phlegmatic fatalism of the Slav, and the palpable fear of the coward upon the faces and in the actions of my fellow-travellers; but never before had I seen the embodiment of the spirit of unalloyed duty chasing all other sentiments away. I spoke to scores of my fellow-passengers, but everywhere it was the same tale. Neither optimism nor pessimism, joy nor sorrow, fear nor exultation—just a sincere and overmastering feeling of duty. They preferred not to discuss the chances of the coming struggle—their recollections of the fatal war of '97 offered but unappetising food for thought—they preferred not to think.

When we sailed into Corfu harbour on the morning of October 17, a busy official pinnace came alongside, and the Governor of the island came aboard to inform his Queen that war had been declared. As the news flew round the crowded decks, I looked for some manifestation of feeling, but there was none: we had close upon three thousand Greeks on board, but the news of war left them cold—unmoved. Here and there a man turned to his neighbour with "I thought so," or "Just as I expected." It was like a train-load of passengers arriving at their destination—it was what they had expected—their journey's end was war.

Resplendent in white paint, her decks gay with a guard of honour, the Royal yacht was waiting for Queen Olga to tranship. Followed by her lady-in-waiting, the faintest of smiles upon her lips, she passed along our crowded decks to the accommodation-ladder. Heads were bared and bowed along the living lane through which she passed, but the profoundest silence reigned. Heads were craned outboard as she passed down to the snorting

pinnacle, but the silence remained unbroken. The little boat had traversed half the distance to the Royal yacht before the Queen turned and bowed one unmistakable good-bye to us; 'twas then at last the cheer for which I had waited broke from our teeming decks—once, twice and thrice it boomed forth; hats and handkerchiefs fluttered along our rail. She bowed low her acknowledgment; a tell-tale handkerchief in Her Majesty's hand told me that those cheers had not left her as unmoved as she evidently wished us to believe. The band aboard the yacht struck up the National Anthem, cannon boomed, and the incident was over, as the steward's bell summoned us below to luncheon. I wondered then, and I wonder now, for how many of my fellow-passengers does the luncheon bell ring to-day.

In the chilly dawn of October 18th we landed at Patras to learn for certain that the country was in a state of war. But, save for a dearth of men about the streets and quays, there was nothing to mark the fact. It was lads and old men who handled our luggage and brought us coffee and grapes. As our narrow-gauge train puffed merrily through the dusty country we got occasional glimpses of military preparations. At Corynth there were half a dozen trains crammed full of soldiery and of recruits. The roofs of the carriages and wagons were as crowded as the carriages themselves. We leant out of the windows and wished them God-speed as we went upon our way, and they answered us quietly yet cheerfully withal. There is little of excitement or enthusiasm in the composition of the Greek character; he is infinitely less demonstrative than even the notoriously phlegmatic Britisher.

The few days that I spent in Athens only served to confirm my first impressions. Athens in war time is reminiscent of London on a Sunday in August. There is no traffic in the wide, clean streets, for all the horses have been taken by the Army. Such men as one does see about the streets are clad in khaki uniforms—the women are mostly busy, either at home or at the improvised hospitals rolling bandages or making woollen underclothing for the use of the troops. Only at the various Ministries were there any signs of activity and

bustle. Like all the other foreign journalists—there was perhaps a score of us all told, of whom the majority represented English papers—I spent most of my time between the Ministry of War and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

It was at the latter that the official censorship bureau was established, and such news as was intended for publication was eked out in dribbles in French and Greek to those who cared to content themselves with this meagre fare of official news. Those of us who preferred to use our own eyes and ears for gathering information had to bring our telegrams here for signature before sending them off. Two polyglot officials ruled over this world of journalists—Mr. Delyannis belonging to the Ministry, and Professor Andreadis, commandeered from the university. The duties of a censor are not such as are likely to ingratiate him with the journalist, but these two gentlemen did all that they could in courtesy to render our mutual relations as amicable as possible, by giving us such advice and facilities as lay in their power. For some reason unknown to me, the busiest hour of the twenty-four was midnight, and it was seldom that these hard-worked officials got away from their office before 2 a.m. It was Professor Andreadis who suggested that I might like to be introduced to Monsieur Coromilas, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, but I admit I was surprised to be given a rendezvous for 1.30 a.m.

Monsieur Coromilas is one of those cosmopolitan gentlemen of the old school who impresses one from the first with a sense of old-world courtesy combined with obvious capacity. As Greek Minister in Washington, he lived many years in the States, where he acquired an insight into American methods of hustle, a thorough knowledge of the English language, and a charming wife. On several subsequent occasions I fear I must plead guilty to wasting some of M. Coromilas' time, but I think it speaks much for his patience and courtesy that in those early days of the war, when officialdom was working double time, he should have consented to waste close upon an hour of his valuable time in telling me all about Epirus and Albania. I fancy that in few countries would a Foreign Minister show a similar courtesy

to a mere journalist three days after the declaration of a vital war.

During those first days in Athens there was little enough for us journalists to do save to importune officials for information and interviews, and to chafe at the regulations which refused to permit us to go to join the Army. The news of the victories at Ellassona and Sarantoporo left Athens practically unmoved so far as the casual observer could see, but to those who looked below the surface it was obvious that these first victories were a great relief to the tension of national and official feeling. Until then Greece had but hoped to hold her own—she had not dared to hope for victory; and I, for one, was profoundly impressed with the calm spirit in which these unanticipated victories were greeted, soberly, thankfully, but with no exaggerated ideas of national prowess such as one might have looked for in a Southern people.

The day after the battle of Sarantoporo the word went round that we journalists were free to proceed to the front, and we each went our separate ways, intent on getting our official permits in order. Each of us had to make application to proceed to the front, and enclose a photograph, together with a certificate from our own Ministry in Athens. In the course of a few hours I found myself in possession of a card of identity, on one side of which was set out the paper which I represented, on the other my photograph was pasted, and a copy of my signature. I was also presented with a spade-shaped blue-and-white badge, the size of a small plate, to pin to my breast, on which the letters *Eφ* were worked, being the initial letters of the Greek word for "Newspaper."

Without exception all the other journalists were bound for the major theatre of war in Thessaly: from what I knew and had heard of the Crown Prince, now King Constantine, I felt sure that this mixed avalanche of local and foreign journalists would meet with but a frigid reception, and thus it was that I decided to try my luck in the western theatre of war, in Epirus, as the only foreign journalist. I felt sure that I would be likely to get greater opportunities; nor was I disappointed. Once this decision taken, I found I had just

half an hour to throw my belongings into a carriage and to reach the station. I trusted to luck to pick up the necessary equipment and stores on my way: the one essential was to reach the Greek headquarters at Arta as soon as possible. Equipped only with a B.S.A. bicycle, a Webley revolver, and a Gladstone bag, I set out to commence the campaign of Epirus, wishing mightily that I had had time to purchase a map of the country and acquire a smattering of the language.

CHAPTER III

THE OPPOSING FORCES IN EPIRUS

AT the commencement of the war the Greeks had concentrated all their best troops on the Thessalian frontier, as it was judged imperative to make more progress on this side. Epirus was but a strategical backwater, however important the capture of Yannina and the annexation of Epirus was from a political point of view. At first the Greek Army was fighting rather for the national existence than for extension of territory, wherefore the General Staff had decided that such troops as could be spared to Epirus should act entirely on the defensive. As a matter of fact, the Army of Epirus—or the 8th Division as it was subsequently named—was a mere pot-pourri of the units which were left over when the Salonika field army had been mobilised. As days went by, and volunteers, irregulars, and Greek recruits from abroad came into Athens, and were drilled and equipped and sent on to Epirus, the Army gradually grew to the normal strength of a Division; but at the first, when war broke out, it barely numbered 6,500 men, consisting of the following units:

- | | |
|--|--|
| 3 batteries of Field Artillery | } Improved from depôt units a few days before war broke out. |
| 3 batteries of Mountain Ar- tillery | |
| 4 battalions of Evzones. | |
| 3 battalions of Infantry, improvised at the last minute out of the excess of recruits for the 6th Regiment: these three battalions were created a new regiment and styled the 15th. | |
| 1 squadron of Cavalry. | |
| And about 300 irregulars—that is to say armed villagers | |

of Epirus who had come down to Arta and received such arms and equipment as the authorities could find for them.

Owing to incomplete cadres, this force totalled about 6,500 all told at the moment hostilities broke out, and was distributed over some forty miles of frontier in the vicinity of Arta.

In addition to the twenty-four guns with this force, there were also four 6-in. Krupp guns of an old but serviceable pattern, mounted in the redoubt at Arta which was the headquarters of the detachment.

The Greek lines of communication ran by two routes, of which the Koprena route was the more utilised. Koprena consists of a landing-stage and two houses, and lies on the Gulf of Arta, some nine miles south of that town, to which it is connected by a fairly good carriage-road. Government steamers ferried across the gulf from Koprena to Khavaserá, whence thirty-two miles of good road led to railhead at Agrinion.

The alternative route was the road which led round the gulf from Khavaserá to Arta, a distance of thirty-two miles; and doubtless this would have been more utilised than it was had the two Turkish pinnaces at Preveza shown sufficient initiative to attack the Greek ferry-boat.

The railway from Agrinion to the pier opposite Patras, on the Gulf of Corinth, is a narrow-gauge single-track line, quite incapable of dealing with any volume of traffic, and even the passenger trains take four hours to accomplish the thirty-odd miles. It will be seen, therefore, that not only were the Greek lines of communication very complicated, but they were also vulnerable had the Turks at Preveza taken the trouble to fit out any of the few boats that lay in the port with a gun or two from the ramparts. But no attempt of this sort was made.

The Turkish forces in Epirus consisted of the 23rd (Independent) Division of Nizam (Regulars), who formed the permanent garrison of Yannina and furnished a detachment of one battalion to garrison Preveza. Yannina was also the headquarters of a Redif (Reserve) Division recruited mainly from Albanians; but owing to

the extremely faulty mobilisation arrangements, and the fact that a few days before the declaration of war all the third-year soldiers were dismissed the colours, neither of these divisions actually mustered more than between 45 and 55 per cent. of their paper strength.

In addition to the twenty battalions of infantry and six field batteries (three only of which were modern quick-firers, the remainder being an older model Krupp field gun), there were some 300 garrison artillery to serve the big fortress guns of the Yannina defences.

Essad Pasha, the Turkish General commanding in chief in Epirus, tells me that his available troops only mustered 8,000 strong, but I cannot but think, in view of known casualties and prisoners taken when Yannina fell, that the total number was little short of double that figure. The semicircle of fortified mountains that protected Yannina mounted a considerable number of heavy guns, the details of which are set out in a later chapter, whilst the forts at Preveza mounted a dozen old Krupp guns, four of which were 6-inchers. Essad Pasha—not to be confounded with the defender of Scutari who later proclaimed himself Prince of Albania—was the Commander-in-Chief of the Turkish forces in Epirus. It so happens that at the time I am writing this chapter (*April 1913*) Essad and his senior officers are prisoners of war here in Kephissia, and we frequently meet one another and talk of the war over the tea-table, so that I am in a position to roughly sketch his character.

Essad Pasha is an Albanian Moslem whose home is Yannina. He is about 5 ft. 11 in. in height, with light brown hair and a reddish moustache: he looks what he is, an unimaginative soldier whose oriental surroundings have to some extent modified the determination displayed in the chin and the fire that burns in his eyes. In manner he is extremely courteous, but reserved; and in spite of the great kindness and consideration shown to him by all the Greeks I am sure that he feels acutely his present invidious position as a prisoner of war. He is a comparatively young man, and wealthy, but somewhat lacking in ambition—for “ambition should be made of sterner stuff.” His military knowledge was acquired in Germany, where he spent many years. He is a man such

as one cannot but respect, but as a military commander he lacked in initiative and imagination, and personally I have formed the opinion that he was not a little swayed in his decisions by his impulsive and vigorous younger brother, Vehib Bey, who was also his Chief of Staff.

Vehib Bey is of a Semitic cast of countenance, extremely polished in manner, but with somewhat sinister eyes. I have been told that it was he who is in some measure responsible for the excesses committed by Turkish and Albanian troops upon the defenceless villagers of Epirus, but it is difficult to think such things of an otherwise cultivated man whom I have frequently entertained in my house. Judging, however, from my knowledge of the two brothers, I should deem it certain that it was Vehib's fire, rather than Essad's determination, that animated the Yannina garrison to such a stubborn and prolonged resistance.

Phwatt Bey, the commander of Bizāni (Turkish Bishān), is quite a different stamp of man—a pleasant, cosmopolitan, and agreeable companion who distinguished himself in Tripoli during the war with Italy. He possesses considerable technical knowledge as a soldier, and is, I should imagine, an easy-going fellow who could look equally at home in a London drawing-room or on a Highland grouse moor. He has complained to me of the great difficulty he experiences in keeping his weight and figure down to reasonable proportions; certainly it is hard to recognise in this dapper, rotund civilian, whose merry eyes show signs of good-humour and good living, the man who for six months urged the starving and decimated garrison of the great Turkish fortress to such a bitter and gallant resistance.

Until the commencement of 1913 the Greek commander-in-chief was General Sapountzakis, who was chief of staff to King Constantine throughout the disastrous campaign of 1897. In speaking of General Sapountzakis, I feel myself greatly handicapped, for throughout the many months when I was closely associated with him at Arta and at Philippias I received so many kindnesses at his hands that to criticise seems an act of base ingratitude. I am, however, endeavouring to convey to my readers an unbiassed statement of facts, and I do not

think it right that I should stultify my remarks by any consideration of personal friendship or gratitude towards the man who was, after all, the Greek commander-in-chief in Epirus.

From the first General Sapountzakis' position was unenviable. Not only were his troops vastly inferior in numbers and in training to those which they had to face, but his staff officers had little knowledge or aptitude for their work, and little sympathy either with himself or with each other. Nor was his own personal position by any means an enviable one.

As Chief of Staff in the '97 campaign, he was responsible for the conduct of the war; his were the plans, the organisation and the arrangements; but it was the Crown Prince, now King Constantine, who bore all the blame for the unbroken series of disasters. A few years ago it was General Sapountzakis who was at the head of the Military League whose action resulted in King Constantine resigning his position in the Army as Commander in Chief, thus leaving General Sapountzakis the senior Greek officer on the active list. A few months before war was declared the *amende honorable* was made, and the then Crown Prince returned to lead the main Greek Army to victory and to Salonica, but the Government thought it a politically wise move to appoint General Sapountzakis to the command of the Army at Epirus. The relations between the two Greek commanders were, therefore, somewhat strained.

Sapountzakis is a man of sixty-seven years, who, never very active physically, finds his years sit heavily upon him; ever since the '97 campaign he had become a recluse, seldom going out and never taking exercise. A martyr to rheumatism, the damp and cold climate of Epirus kept him to his desk, and on the rare occasions when he did go out, he preferred a motor-car to a horse. It was only at the very end of the campaign, when the General found himself in command of the right flank in a country where no roads existed, that he mounted a horse for the first time in the campaign. As a general his chief fault was lack of determination; he listened usually to the counsel of the last comer. He was over-cautious, vacillating, undecided. These were the faults

of his old age, and perhaps his mind had been unduly oppressed by memories of the previous campaign.

Again he was ill served by his staff. This consisted of a number of officers, all strangers both to the General and to one another, who had no experience of staff work, and only one or two of them had the requisite military knowledge for the positions they filled. Colonel Yoanno, an engineer, was the chief of staff. A man of undaunted courage and remarkable personality, he had completed his military studies in France, but he was unsuited in character for staff work. He was at his best leading his men in some desperate attack, but in his office he was "distract," and I believe lacked the power of concentrating his mind upon paper problems. Most of the early successes of the war were due either to his splendid leading of the troops or to the fiery appeals which he made to the General to push onward. There was nothing of the Fabius Cunctator about Yoanno—his was a policy and counsel of fierce attack and relentless pursuit. As a leader of men he had no equal in the whole army; as a chief of staff he was an administrative failure, and one can easily believe that with his character—the exact opposite of the General's—he and his chief did not get on very well.

CHAPTER IV

EARLY DAYS AT ARTA

I do not think I shall ever forget the manner of my arrival at Arta. On passing through Patras I went and made the acquaintance of Mr. Crowe, who, in addition to being the British Vice-Consul, is also the most important commercial man in the town. He loaded me with good advice, letters of introduction, and kindness of all sorts. He warned me that I should have considerable difficulty in sending my telegrams from Arta, and advised me to arrange to send my news by road to Patras, and put it on the wire there: it appears that Messrs. Prior and Scudamore, who were out here during the '97 campaign, were eventually obliged to resort to this somewhat slow means of transmission, so I made my arrangements to do likewise, and Mr. Crowe very kindly offered to help my news on to the wire at Patras. As things turned out, however, I was not obliged to avail myself of these arrangements.

The narrow-gauge railway which landed me up at Agrinion was kind enough to leave my bicycle behind, and so I spent many hateful hours cooling my heels in that little village, and taking my first look at the Greek soldiery, their arms and equipment, of which more anon. When eventually my bicycle did arrive, at eight o'clock at night, there was a bright moon, and I determined, against the urgent counsels of the officers with whom I had made friends, to start at once.

It was, looking back upon it, rather a wild idea. I had not a map of the country, nobody could tell me within thirty or forty miles what the distance was, and I had long since forgotten the few words of modern Greek which I had picked up in Egypt. Added to this, I

only had the foggiest idea of the military situation, and was quite prepared to find myself pedalling into a Turkish patrol or a band of Albanian brigands. I had also been warned that the huge watch-dogs, kept by all the villagers in these parts, were both fierce and dangerous. I prepared myself against all these more or less imaginary dangers by having my service revolver, with the flap of the holster undone, upon the handle-bars, readily available. As regards kit I had taken all badges of rank and braid off my own service uniform, and this having leather buttons, it made an ideal compromise between a military uniform and mufti: just sufficiently military to obtain the respect of civilians, and sufficiently civilian not to be ordered about by any officer. This was the kit I wore throughout the campaign, and found it most satisfactory.

I have cycled in a good many out-of-the-way parts of the world, but I don't think I ever had a more lonely ride than that one, for not a soul did I see on the thirty-two mile stretch to Khavaserá, and only two, or perhaps three, houses. The dogs, however, kept me fairly lively: they picked me up in relays all the way along, and sometimes I had half a dozen of them snapping at my heels at once and making night hideous with their snarling and barking. I admit I was sorely tempted once or twice to put a bullet into some of the more persistent beasts, but luckily I am a bit of an expert on a bicycle, and a well-delivered kick under the mouth when travelling at anything over fifteen miles an hour will discourage even the most savage specimen of the canine race. At one moment, however, I thought it was a clear case for lead and powder. Two great powerful beasts were pacing me along at a pretty hot speed, one snapping at my front tyre, the other at my left pedal, yet keeping just out of kicking distance. I went through an acrobatic feat which resulted in my kicking dog No. 1 right in front of my wheel—that nearly had me off, because these beasts are about the size of a St. Bernard—but a moment after I had gone over him my front wheel ran into a great piece of rock lying in the centre of the road, and off I had to come. Using my bicycle as a shield, I was trying to get at my weapon, which had fallen out of the holster and lay on the ground, when dog No. 2

jumped. The back wheel was still spinning, and I fancy he must have got his nose or paw badly pinched between a spoke and the back stay, for he turned tail and fled howling. A pretence of throwing a stone gave me time to recover my weapon and vault into the saddle, so the episode ended without bloodshed.

At Khavaserá a somewhat sleepy Greek soldier (or gendarme) awoke with a start to my presence as I was abreast of him, and shouted something at me; but the road was good and downhill, and I preferred the risk of a shot to the certainty of an all-night's delay. Nothing, however, happened, though I heard his breech being opened and closed. Presumably his rifle was not loaded, and that gave me time to turn the corner in the village street.

From Khavaserá to Arta there are thirty-odd miles, and fifteen of them in the middle must be hard to negotiate even in daylight after the heavy rains which had fallen. I only know that it was pretty nervous and tricky work riding by moonlight, with all sorts of fantastic shadows from the overhanging trees. Mud-holes, often 2 ft. deep, abounded, and sometimes there were only a few inches of rideable path bordered by a young precipice on the left and a lake of mud upon the right. If once one lost one's nerve and dismounted, it might mean hundreds of yards on foot before one came to a place where it was wide enough to mount again. I had about thirty involuntary dismounts as it was, once landing well above my knees in a mud-hole. However, even that wild journey had an end: I found myself riding through a sleeping camp and then into a sleeping town. It was one o'clock. It had taken me just five hours to ride the sixty-four miles—not very good going, it may seem, but I feel sure, knowing the road as I do, that it is likely to remain a record for quite a long while.

The only waking inhabitants in Arta were a gendarme and the proprietress of the *Café*, the door of which was just being locked as I dismounted. I was very hungry, exceedingly thirsty, and not a little done up; and they ministered to my wants as best they could. I made a beast of myself on sponge-fingers and chocolate, washed down with cognac and water. A bed was the next

difficulty. I made appealing gestures to the old lady to be allowed to sleep on an arrangement of chairs ; but, doubtless mindful of her till, or my appetite for sponge-fingers, she would have none of it. Eventually the *gendarme* led me off to his own house, and gave me a shake-down on one of those *settees* which in the Levant take the place of sofas. Nor would he next day listen to any talk of remuneration, and I could only pay for my night's lodging by surreptitiously decoying his very small son and heir aside, and pressing an undreamed wealth of silver into his astonished palm. Then, with my genial host and guardian of the law, I set out to present myself at headquarters, to show my credentials, and to find out what sort of reception fate had in store for me.

It would take too long to describe the great number of acquaintances, many of them destined to become real friends, that I made during my first few days at Arta—I have in my diary a list of some sixty names, with a few notes against each—but to my great delight I found that nearly everybody I met spoke English or French, whilst not a few spoke both ; those who could not speak English or French generally had a smattering of Italian, German or Arabic, so that one way or another I managed to make myself understood. The linguistic capabilities of the better-class Greek are truly remarkable, and they account for this by the extreme difficulty of their own language ; some of my Greek friends, indeed, prefer to write French to Greek.

I found that there was an institution called the Political Bureau, which amongst many other things ruled over the destinies of the press : the staff of this Bureau was limited, but extremely well chosen, and it appeared to me a type of intelligence staff that we might with advantage copy. The three chief members of this Bureau were Monsieur Saktouris, recently Greek Consul-General at Alexandria, M. Alexandre Karapano, lately *chargé d'affaires* at Rome, and M. Foresti, lately Greek Consul-General at Yannina. The first-named is of Albanian descent, M. Karapano is not only a diplomat and cosmopolitan, but the son of one of the richest men in Greece, whilst M. Foresti probably knows more about Epirus than any living man. There were two understrappers in

this office, one of Albanian descent, the other a Greek official from the consulate in Constantinople, whilst M. Pericles Karapano in the uniform of a private soldier acted as door-keeper, and tried to disguise the fact that he was a member of parliament for the district. It would have been hard to find a better qualified group of men to constitute the staff of the Political Bureau of the Army of Epirus. The duties of the Bureau were manifold: they collected and collated the reports brought in by inhabitants; they organised and armed the Greek villagers who wished to fight against the Turks; they looked after the thousands of Greek refugees from the Turkish province; they cyphered and de-cyphered all communications with Athens, carried on the press censorship, and provided for the civil administration of each conquered acre as the Greek Army moved forward. I have not the least doubt that this Bureau took an immense amount of work off the shoulders of the military staff, and did the work far better than any bureau of officers would have done it, whilst at the same time setting free officers to their more legitimate occupation of carrying on purely military work.

Just at first, I think, the censorship of my telegrams was a trifle severe, and, not unnaturally, the authorities were not quite sure to what extent I could be trusted. The Greeks believe—and I have reason to think that they have substantial grounds for their belief—that during the '97 campaign they were frequently given away by some of the foreign war correspondents. The Turks profited not a little from the information published in the European papers, whilst it is believed that some of the German and Austrian correspondents were actually in receipt of remuneration from the Turks. Be this as it may, the Greeks were determined to have no repetition of this sort of thing, and until I became personally known my messages to my paper were subjected to the most severe scrutiny and abbreviation. On the other hand, I was given excellent telegraphic facilities, my messages were given priority over all others except the official or military telegrams, and every facility was given to me to obtain news and to transmit it.

Later on this staff was weakened as the demand for

good men elsewhere became imperative, and at one moment we had a most remarkable state of affairs. The proprietor of one of the Greek dailies who is also a deputy of the Chamber came to Epirus as civil governor-designate of Yannina once the city should fall; in the meanwhile he got himself appointed Chief Censor. I remember the war correspondent of another Greek paper complaining to me bitterly that the censor made use of his position to see that news to his own paper was given priority, and also that after all the other correspondents had submitted their MSS. a second message was made up, including all the tit-bits gleaned from these. I do not know if this was so, but it was certainly a strong temptation.

This state of affairs, however, did not last long, for as soon as Prince Constantine took over supreme command this gentleman was sent back to Athens, after only enjoying some ten days of authority. But I am digressing. In a future chapter I shall deal with the censorship question in more detail, and with some of the more curious sides of Hellenic journalism; for the nonce I will hark back to those first few days at Arta.

Arta is a disagreeable little town of about 10,000 inhabitants, built on the space between the steep hill on the top of which is perched the old Venetian fort, and the sinuous bends of the River Arakthos, which is a rapid stream some 40 yards wide and 4 ft. deep in summer, but in the rainy season broadens out over its rocky bed to a breadth of 150 yards. This river formed the frontier line. A kilometer of flat road bordered by resplendent orange groves leads past the wonderful Byzantine church to the equally remarkable bridge.

The church is in a sad state of disrepair and poverty, but it is said nevertheless, with the exception of the famous Santa Sophia at Constantinople, to be the finest extant example of Byzantine architecture in the world. The bridge, with its four spans, dates from the Venetian occupation, is remarkable for the narrowness of its roadway (10 ft.), and for the sharp angle at which the last span from the Greek shore is pitched: here the roadway is practically a flight of diminutive steps.

With the exception of the main street, bordered by its crazy rows of eating-houses and "Bakals," the streets

of the town are stone-strewn rubbish-heaps in summer, and mud-heaps in winter ; when it rains, which it usually does six days a week in winter, the water rushes several inches deep through the streets, and the inhabitants walk along the pavements, which are raised about 3 ft. above the roadway ; notwithstanding, I have even seen these pavements aflood during a rainstorm.

Down by the riverside, with massive mediæval walls and battlements, stands the old Venetian castle, as it is called (it probably dates from a much earlier period), covering some twenty acres. This wide walled-in space was subsequently utilised as a dumping-ground for expended transport animals, pending sale or death ; and two long modern buildings were converted into a hospital run by the Italian Red Cross Society.

CHAPTER V

THE BATTLE OF GRIMBOVO-KUMUZADES

IN the '97 campaign the Turks had placed some artillery near Imaret, and had made things very unpleasant for Arta. The Greeks were determined to avoid a repetition of this state of affairs, and about 2 p.m. on October 19th a company of Evzones and a few troopers rushed over the bridge, dislodging some thirty Turks who were amongst the houses and bamboo thickets on the farther bank. It must be noted that for at least a week previously picked riflemen had been placed at the Greek bridgehead with orders to fire upon any party attempting to prepare the bridge for demolition, and the Greeks had also bridged the river above the town—an engineering effort that was washed away with the first flood rains. By nightfall four companies of Evzones and some fifty irregulars had reached the positions of Imaret and Grimbovo with comparatively slight losses.

That night, so Essad Pasha's staff officer informs me, the Turkish Nizam Division of nine battalions (only 300 rifles per battalion) and three field batteries arrived at Philippias, strengthening the four Albanian Reserve battalions (about 800 rifles per battalion) who were watching the Greek troops on the lower Arakthos.

On Sunday, 20th, three companies of Evzones, pushing on, occupied Kilverina Mountain, Kiaffa Gorge; one company pushing as far forward as the lower summits of the Zerovo Mountains. Rain was falling almost incessantly; the mountain sides are precipitous and pathless, and the men were without food or orders since they had left Grimbovo in the early morning. The village of Kumuzades was found occupied by the Turks, but the day was too far advanced to attempt to dislodge

them. That was a miserable night for the men of these scattered companies, for not only had they no food, but they felt themselves cut off from their own comrades. An urgent message for reinforcement and food obtained no response; soaked to the skin, the men stood to their arms throughout the tempestuous night. The morning brought a company of the 15th Regiment and a mountain battery, which established itself in the Gorge of Khiaffa, and as soon as the light served an advance was made against Kumuzades; by nine o'clock the Turks withdrew and the village was occupied by the Greeks.

It was then learnt that the enemy here consisted of two battalions of Albanian Redifs, who had laid themselves out to make friends with the inhabitants. The villagers had helped them to care for the Turkish wounded, and had supplied the officers with comfortable quarters and such luxuries as milk and cheese. These amenities are worthy of note in regard to the sequel. At the time they appeared of good augury for the civilised conduct of the war. The villagers hailed the Greek troops with indescribable delight, lavishing kisses on their hands and blessings on their heads. Towards the afternoon Turkish troops could be seen moving over the plain about Strivina. The Greek position about Kumuzades now consisted of the following units from north to south:

One company of Evzones and fifty irregulars on the spurs of the Zerovo mountains, three or four miles to the northward.

North of Kumuzades one company of Evzones.

In the village one company of the 15th Regiment.

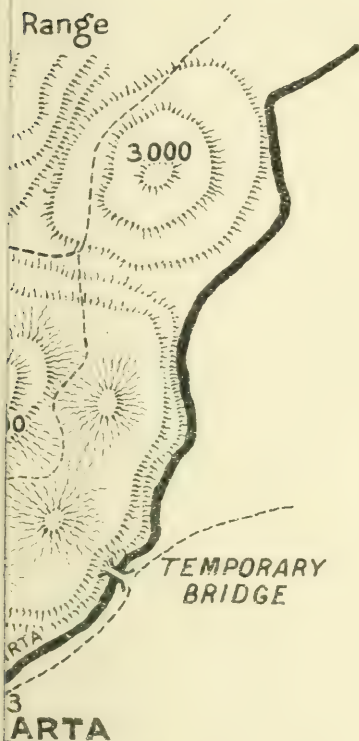
South of the village one company of Evzones.

About a mile to the south-west and slightly to the rear another company.

In the gorge a half-company and the mule battery.

The whole force, numbering about 1,100 rifles and 4 guns, faced in a general westerly direction. About Gimbovo and Imaret, under Colonel Yoanno (the Chief of Staff) were three more companies of the 15th Regiment, two and a half companies of Evzones and two mountain batteries, whilst again to the south in Arta itself, or to the south of the town, were two battalions of infantry and two field batteries.

GRIMBOVO-KUMUZADES.



Contours at 1000 ft V.I.

Scale, 1 Inch = 4 Miles.

1. Lower Imaret
2. Upper Imaret
3. Arta Castle
4. Arta Fort
5. Lower Grimbovo
6. Upper Grimbovo
7. Gorge of Kiaffa
8. Mountain of Kilberina

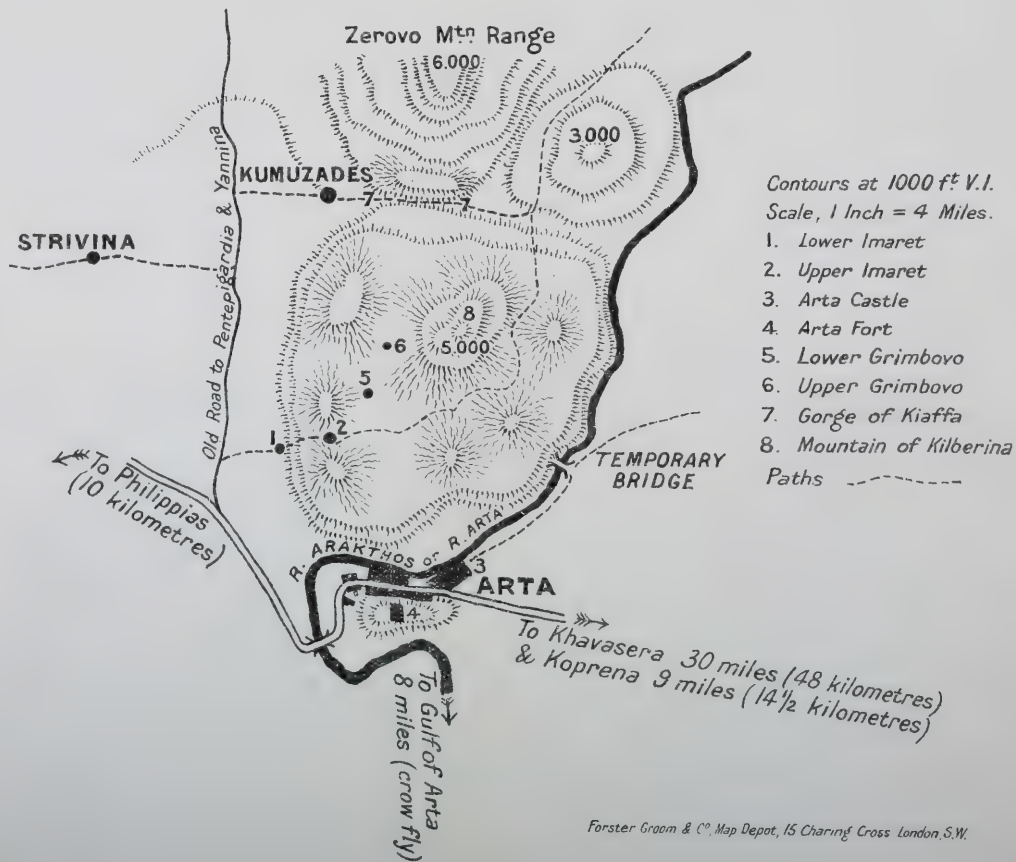
Paths - - - - -

3
ARTA

→
To Khavasera 30 miles (48 kilometres)
& Koprena 9 miles (14½ kilometres)

Forster Groom & Co Map Depot, 15 Charing Cross London, S.W.

THE BATTLE OF GRIMBOVO-KUMUZADES.



Forster Groom & Co. Map Depot, 15 Charing Cross London, S.W.

On October 23rd, at 9 a.m., the Turks commenced a general attack all along this wide front of twelve miles; to the southward they contented themselves with holding the Greek attention, but at Kumuzades they pushed home their attack, supported by two batteries of field artillery. The Greek mountain battery was forced to retire about midday, and the company of the 15th Regiment, who had taken up an indefensible position in the village itself, with no field of fire, found itself decimated. Their ammunition was expended, and one section consisting of Corfiotes (natives of Corfu) broke away in disorder. To add to the confusion, the Turkish shells had set fire to some of the houses, very few officers remained unwounded, and as the Turks pushed forward the Greek resistance broke down. The two Evzone companies retired in good order, carefully economising their last few rounds of ammunition; the remnants of the 15th Regiment broke away to the rear.

But the Turks¹ did not attempt to push on beyond the village. They had more congenial work nearer at hand. The village priest and twenty-five men of the village fell into their hands. They were unarmed, but were accused of sheltering and helping the Greeks. With their hands bound behind them they were marched up to a little eminence in full view of the Greeks, and were told to shout to their compatriots not to fire, and they would be allowed to join the Greek lines. As the small band lifted their voices in a cry of warning, the Turks fired at their backs; it was a massacre at which the Greek soldiers, 200 yards away, looked on impotent. Two alone of the victims had the presence of mind to throw themselves down on the ground and to pretend to be dead, thus escaping the *coup de grâce* which was delivered to the wounded in this horrid affair. These two young fellows managed, when night fell, to make good their escape to the Greek lines, and here they told us how all the women and girls were locked up in the church, to which the Turkish officers had access: here throughout the day they had been victims of nameless excesses, as we afterwards discovered.

This barbarism, committed in full view of the Greek

¹ These were Albanian Redifs.

soldiery, had a remarkable effect upon the morale of the men who witnessed it. They were almost without ammunition, soaked to the skin, practically without food for four days, cut off from all communication with their supports and with Arta, but it was with the greatest difficulty that the few officers who still remained alive could induce them to retire farther up the mountain side, and seek safe positions for the night—their one idea was to retake the village at any cost.

That night, October 23rd to 24th, amidst a tropical downpour, the Turks, underestimating the resisting powers of their adversaries, made a night attack at 2 a.m. Wherever they found Greek troops they were repulsed, but owing to faulty staff work Kilverina Mountain had been left unoccupied, and when dawn broke through the rain-storms it was discovered that the Turks had interposed between the two sections of the Greek forces. The men of the northern section were in a perilous plight, and had they hoisted the white flag it would have been no dishonour. The only ammunition that remained to them was what they had taken from their own dead and wounded; they had been without food or message from headquarters since the commencement of operations, 110 hours before; most of their officers were dead or wounded; they had spent the whole night in desperate bayonet fighting against superior odds, but the isolated companies still rallied together in broken fragments, grouped about the Kopjes that they occupied. The Turkish artillery pounded at them with shrapnel, and the infantry commenced a surrounding movement, which was never destined to be completed. Away to the southward the Greeks were seen to be making progress: nearer and nearer the tide of battle flowed. A battalion of the 15th Regiment was launched against Kilverina, which was taken at the point of the bayonet; by midday the Greek arms were victorious along the whole front, and theirs was the offensive. The burning ruins of Kumuzades village were reoccupied by the Greek troops, and the wretched women and children in the church were liberated. By 4 p.m. the remnants of the Turkish Army were in full retreat up the road to Pentepigar-

dia, and ere nightfall Philippias was occupied by Greek troops.

A Greek cavalry officer on General Sapountzakis' staff (Lieut. George Melas),¹ who with two orderlies entered the village about five o'clock, was made the subject of an ovation by the inhabitants, who assisted him in disarming the few Turkish soldiers and gendarmes who remained in the village.

The casualties of the six days' fighting will never be accurately known, for the area covered by the fighting was a wild tangle of mountain peaks and precipices. Around Kumuzades itself the Turks left some 200 killed and the Greeks 65; 150 Turkish corpses were found after the night attack on Grimbovo. Thus the Turkish casualty roll was brought up to close upon 1,000 killed and wounded, or one-fifth of the total number of men engaged, whilst the Greek losses including wounded were about 300 or about one-eighth of the troops engaged.

The lessons we can gather from this six-days' engagement are mostly of a negative order and such as, it is hoped, we English have already thoroughly mastered. The Turks underestimated the courage and endurance of their enemies, and made a night attack without proper reconnaissance or any definite plan as to occupying and supporting the positions taken. The Greek faults were entirely due to bad staff arrangements. Detached com-

¹ " *Philippias, Friday, October 25th.*—Happy and memorable day for me! Having heard that the enemy had withdrawn from the plain, I obtained leave from the General to go scouting. Took a corporal and a trooper, and after a gallop arrive (at 11 a.m.) at the Louros Bridge. Here I found a cavalry subaltern with his troop. I leave him to come on at a walk, so as not to risk loss to our cavalry, which is so few. I gallop into Philippias, where the inhabitants go mad with enthusiasm and frantic joy. Bells ring out at full peal. The people kiss my hands and knees and even my horse. It was a touching scene! At the entrance to the village, on the main road, the priest, surrounded by village notables, waited to bless in my person the Greek army. I press on as far as Old Philippias [one mile, A.H.T.], and take prisoner four Turkish soldiers with arms in their hands. Give over to the custody of the inhabitants a great depot of munitions, telegraph, post office, etc. The cavalry subaltern and his troop come up. After giving them certain orders, I take the road back to Arta *via* Strivina, where I take the flag from the barracks for Georges [Lieut. Melas' son, A.H.T.]. I reach Arta at 5 p.m., and the crowd seeing the red flag across my saddle, cheer enthusiastically. (Congratulated by the General!)" [Extract from the diary of Lieut. G. Melas.]

panies were left for days without orders, ammunition or food, and the positions of these outlying companies were never even visited by members of the staff. No general idea of operations was issued, and no company commander had any idea as to what was expected of him.

The actual fighting of the Greek soldiery was alike above criticism and praise. It must be remembered that the 15th Regiment, as it was called, was in reality nothing more than a levy of raw reservists, few of whom had ever done any colour service. The men found themselves in uniform for the first time under officers whom they did not know, and who, with few exceptions, were reservists themselves. By all the accepted rules of war they were beaten, and should have retreated or surrendered: without orders, food or ammunition, cut off from their base; decimated, beaten, and driven back on the 23rd; cut off and partially surrounded on the morning of the 24th, they still stuck to their posts in a manner which would have done credit to a discipline finer than the Greeks are ever likely to possess. It was a soldiers' battle entirely, where the grit of the individual Greek soldier won through to victory in spite of the muddle made by the staff.

CHAPTER VI

LIFE AT ARTA

THE Turks, after their defeat at Grimbovo, fell back sullenly up the Pentepigardia valley.

After the battle of Grimbovo-Kumuzades, we had eight days of comparative quiet at Arta, and I had time to look about me and to take notice. Every day large numbers of Greek refugees from the villages in Turkish territory kept pouring into the town in little clusters of a dozen or so. The old men, women and children were eventually concentrated in a refugee camp, where they eked out existence upon fourpence a day per head allowed to them by the Greek Government; but just at first they mostly inhabited the streets, and a very pitiful spectacle they made. The usual family group would consist of an old man and an old woman, both bent double with toil, age and fear; a younger woman, the wife of the breadwinner, and a bevy of half-starved, wild-eyed children. There they would sit on the pavement or any rubbish-heap, with all their most cherished worldly possessions about them—all that they had been able to save and carry from their devastated homestead, ten or twelve hours' walk away: a saucepan, a tin mug, a straw mat, a woollen shawl and a cotton rag, tied up at the corners, in which were carefully collected the remnants of their last miserable repast.

These poor folk were absolutely homeless and without hope of ever again making a home. The flotsam and jetsam of war, whoever wins, has usually to pay the price. But many of these were not only the victims of destitution—they had faced more urgent trouble than that of mere starvation. During those first months of the campaign, before the Turks and Albanians thoroughly

realised that they were fighting a losing cause, they committed the most revolting atrocities upon the defenceless inhabitants of Epirus. I do not propose to harrow my reader with the indescribable details of these debauched excesses, because they are not fit for publication, but most of these refugees at Arta had escaped from the scene of some massacre, and not a few of them had seen their loved ones done to death under the most revolting circumstances.

Such of the men as were able to bear arms enrolled themselves as irregulars in one of the many Epirote bands which were being formed. The Greek Government provided bayonets, rifles and ammunition, and laid down a general outline of the work required. These bands did invaluable work later on the Greek left, where they not only safeguarded a vast area of Greek villages against Albanian incursions, but also protected the Greek lines of communication. At first, however, these irregulars were mostly occupied in the work of rescuing their own women and children, and bringing them down in safety to Greek Headquarters. The usual procedure in the Epirote villages was for the men to escort the women and children to some wellnigh inaccessible mountain fastness; here they would be left with all the food that could be collected, under the care of the old men and boys, whilst all the able-bodied men, usually headed by the village priest, started off at their best pace for Arta, there to procure arms and ammunition, and then to return to escort the women down to safety. It was pitiful to see the anxiety of these men when they reached Arta, after having run perhaps twenty or thirty miles over a mountain country without food or drink. The necessary delay in giving out arms wellnigh drove them frantic, for they knew that any moment the Turks might discover the hiding-places of their women—and they knew only too well what sort of a shambles they would then find on their return.

A party of twelve men and a priest from some village about thirty miles away in the Yannina direction particularly attracted my attention. They arrived in Arta about midnight, having negotiated the whole of the journey since daybreak by unfrequented paths. Their

sobs when they found they were too late to obtain arms that night, their joy when early next morning each man received a weapon and ammunition! They started away at a brisk trot from the town, but as they passed the church they found time to kneel down while the priest murmured a few prayers, and then off again at a rattling pace, the men fondling and even kissing their rifles, as a father might fondle an only son. I have often wondered if they reached their womenkind in time, for we know of many cases where the relief party returned too late. But enough of these painful recollections, for those were also days of bustle as well as of sorrow in Arta.

On Wednesday, October 30th, two battalions of Cretan militia and Constantine Manos' contingent of 300 volunteers disembarked at Koprena and marched to Arta. I went out to meet them. When they learnt that I was English I found myself greeted with enthusiasm, for it appears they had had some dealings with a British man-of-war, dealings which had left them appreciative of British methods.

When Greece declared war it was decided by the Powers that Crete and Cretans must remain neutral, and a British vessel was sent to Cretan waters to enforce the decree. The Cretan militia, however, were determined to join the Greek Army, so the word went round for the men to go aboard ships sent for the purpose clad in mufti, which, on arrival at Athens, was exchanged for the Greek service uniform. As I fell into step beside the men I got into conversation with quite a number of them, for I found them a polyglot crowd and able to converse with me in some language or other. The fact that I was English made me welcome, and they chatted away quite openly, describing their difficulties in leaving their island home. Many of them had come in contact with British troops and Blue Jackets in the recent Cretan risings, and were full of admiration for Tommy Atkins and all his little endearing ways; they were also most keen to pump me for information as to how things were going at the front and the Greek prospects of success.

The two strong Cretan battalions made a very good show as they marched into Arta, greatly cheered by the

inhabitants and soldiers. At their head rode a priest on horseback, fully armed with rifle and bandolier, and behind him came a standard-bearer carrying the Greek flag surmounted by a cross. It was indeed the church militant. Manos' 300 irregulars were of a very different type: besides their service rifles or carbines, each man carried an imposing array of cutlery and firearms in his belt, those of the various captains of the band being heavily ornamented with silver. The men were wild and ferocious to look at, in their picturesque Cretan national costumes, and they cherished an implacable hatred against the Turk. In all the combats in which they were engaged, they neither asked nor gave quarter.

Constantine Manos himself was—for, poor fellow, he met his death from an aeroplane at Salonica in April 1913—the last man whom one would expect to be the leader of a band of desperate mountaineers: a B.A. of Balliol College, Oxford, and undoubtedly the finest Greek poet of recent times, he had a suave, well-modulated voice, and kindly brown eyes, which usually smiled when he spoke. In the '97 campaign he had raised and equipped a similar legion at his own expense, and had done much good work. About fifty years of age, his moustache was turning grey, but he was as full of energy and courage as in his youth. His father, who has survived him, is that General Manos who made a name for himself in Crete. The Manos family have given copiously of their blood and most of their fortune to the cause of Hellas, and Constantine Manos' name should go down to posterity as the Garibaldi of the Levant.

One of the things which struck me most during those early days at Arta was the lack of initiative and of practical imagination displayed by those in responsible positions. For instance, the depot, which received large consignments of war material daily, was situated 300 yards from the road across a boggy field, which when it rained was in most places several inches deep in water. No attempt was made to make a road through this morass, or to put up a depot by the roadside, although there was plenty of refugee labour to be had for the asking. As it was, hours and hours of time were wasted in trying to get heavy loads up to and away from the

depot, and many traction animals were expended over this stretch of mud.

Again, no attempt was made to commandeer accommodation in the town for the hundreds of officers and men who were quartered there or passing through. With the exception of a few public buildings, the troops had to rely upon the good-will of individual householders to obtain a lodging. There was no system of organised billeting, and the soldiers individually had to pay—and dearly—for what accommodation they got.

The troops in the town were left very much to their own devices—they were never given any drill or musketry practice; the men merely idled away their days, wandering up and down the only main street, smoking cigarettes and looking about them. Those who had money to spend had their meals at the innumerable eating-houses that sprang into existence; those who had no money alone presented themselves at meal-times at the company cooking-place.

Food was rather a complicated question in those days for the officers and for those civilians who found themselves obliged to follow the army. There was one eating-house where the back room was forbidden to the rank and file; it was perhaps 20 ft. square, and during meal-times it was crowded to overflowing, about forty of us feeding at the same time, each man ordering from the very slender choice the dishes he wanted. As may be imagined, the one incompetent waiter was quite unable to cope with the situation, so we were obliged to look after ourselves. At the entrance to the eating-house stood the proprietor and cook, presiding over a dozen pots and pans stewing over a charcoal fire; him we used to besiege plate in hand, and he would ladle out the selected mess; then one had to forage for bread or fruit or wine, to fight for knives and forks. If one happened to be a bit late, one found all the pots empty, and had to fall back on eggs. The proprietor was so afraid of having food left on his hands that he never by any chance cooked sufficient. I have often had to go out to a butcher and purchase meat, and to another shop to buy wine, another for fruit and another for eggs, and then bring my purchases back for cooking and consumption on the premises. So

wretched did I find this arrangement, that for a short while I got together a few fellow-sufferers and started a small mess in the house where two of them had found a lodging. I did the cooking, and the others attended to the washing up, the purchase of supplies, and so forth. Unfortunately, however, our little party broke up automatically after a few days of decent food, as the various members drifted away from Arta, bound on their various businesses.

To add to the difficulties of the food problem at this time, we experienced periodical famines of various necessities. All transport had been commandeered by the military authorities, and there were no means of getting up civilian supplies; we had consecutive famines of bread, sugar, salt, coffee, and wine. Soda-water was never obtainable; butter, biscuits and jam are luxuries even in Athens, so it can easily be imagined that we did not grow fat or enjoy our food at Arta.

CHAPTER VII

BATTLE OF NIKOPOLIS AND FALL OF PREVEZA

THE Cretans were a very welcome addition to the little army of Epirus, which had not hitherto been able to spare troops to undertake operations against the Turkish fortified town of Preveza. On November 1st, the day after their arrival, the Cretans were pushed forward up to the Greek front, there setting free a battalion of the 15th Regiment for operations against Preveza, whilst Manos' Cretans also left on the afternoon of the same day direct for the concentration point, some thirty miles away by road. At dawn on November 2nd the little column was complete; it was commanded by Major Spilladis of the staff, with 2nd Lieutenant Melas (the General's galloper), as an orderly officer, and consisted of:

- 2 guns Field Artillery.
- 1 Battalion 15th Regiment.
- 300 Cretan irregulars under Constantine Manos.
- 300 Epirote irregulars.

This little column advanced along the main road, which runs due south along the ever-narrowing neck of land which culminates in the town and port of Preveza. On the site of the ancient city of Nikopolis the isthmus is at its narrowest, being only two miles across, for here on the eastern side the waters of the Gulf of Arta have eaten inland for about 1,000 yards—a breakwater has been built across this little gulf, and thus a sort of lake is formed, the road passing within a couple of hundred yards of its western extremity.

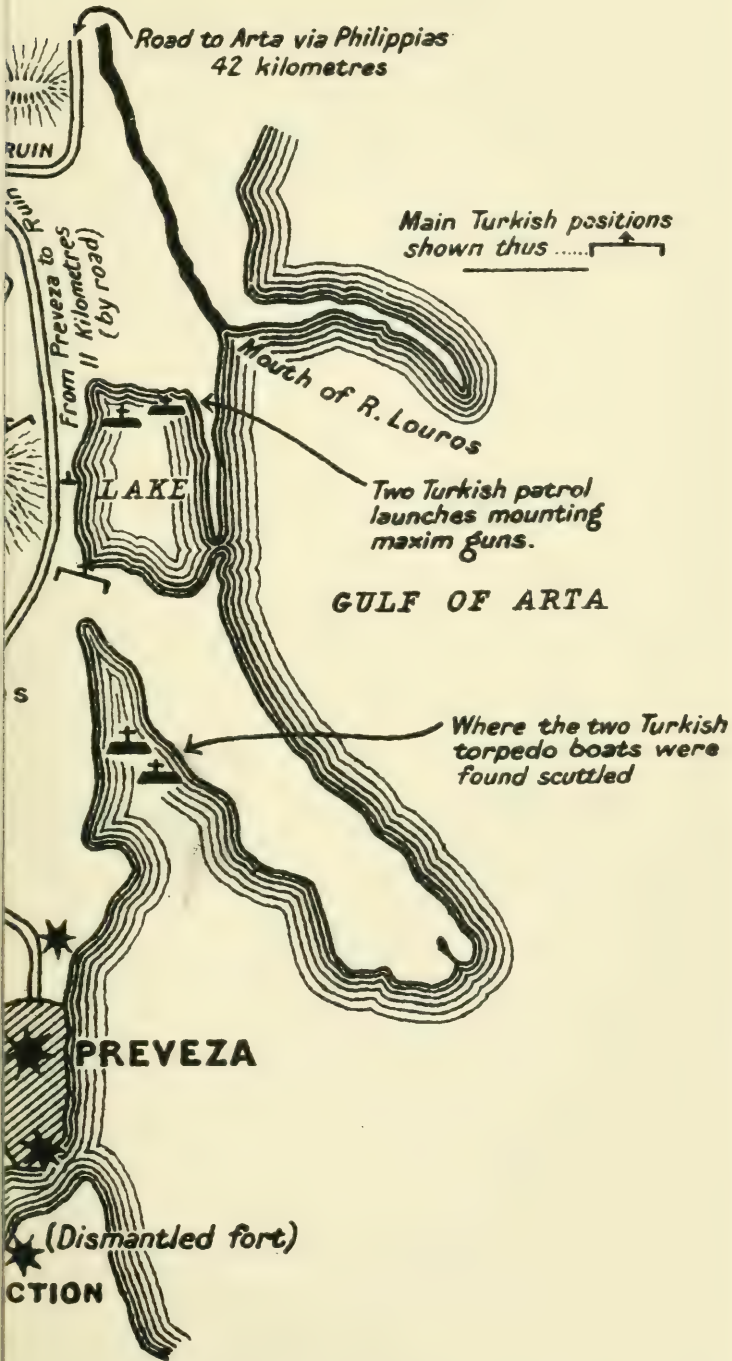
Nikopolis lies about seven miles north of Preveza, from which it is separated by a forest of olive trees. But north of Preveza, where once, before the Turkish occupa-

tion, lay richly cultivated lands, to-day there is nothing but grass and scrub.

The terrain is covered with consecutive ranges of tiny hills running east and west across the isthmus, thus offering consecutive lines of defence at about 300 yards interval. Between the last range and the line of ruins where the Turks had established their main position is a dip of grass land perhaps 700 yards wide, furrowed by ancient ditches affording consecutive lines of entrenchments to the Turks. In the centre of this dip, at the foot of the last ridge of hills, stand two ancient ruins.

The Greeks came in touch with the Turkish skirmishers about 4,000 yards north of their main position. The battalion which was leading the advance along the road deployed two of its four (double) companies to the right, and the Cretans to the right again, establishing touch with the Epirotes, who had marched by a different route and were now working along the shore of the Ionian Sea. The Turkish lines fell back for about a mile before the Greek advance, sniping ineffectually. They had intended to make successive stands on the ridges they crossed, but their courage failed them. They appeared to have no cohesion, and nobody in command; moreover they found themselves continually outflanked by the Epirotes whenever they stopped to check the Greek advance. With very little fighting the Greeks cleared the last ridge of hills and saw the main position of the Turks amongst the ruins of the old acropolis of the city.

Major Spilladis and Lieut. Melas rode up to the eminence marked on the sketch as 500 ft. high, to get a comprehensive view, when they came under the hail of a maxim from a Turkish petrol launch lying in the lake. Both their horses fell, and Melas found himself with his leg pinned down by his beast. Spilladis, kicking his feet free of the stirrups, ran to his comrade's assistance, and being a man of immense strength, succeeded in lifting the carcase of the dead horse and setting the rider free, the while the maxim continued to pump lead at them both. But their danger was rapidly avenged. One of the Greek batteries, 3,700 yards away, had spotted the Turkish launch, and sent a siting shell: so well was the shell aimed that it burst on the petrol tank, and the boat





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with its crew blew up in a sheet of flame and thick black smoke. This sudden vengeance so impressed the crew of the remaining launch that they scuttled their craft and swam or waded to terra firma behind the Turkish lines.

Meanwhile, assisted by a well-directed artillery fire, the Greek infantry and irregulars pushed on vigorously. The four obsolete Turkish guns could make no adequate reply. The Greek lines got to within 300 yards or so of the Turkish position. The Epirotes and Cretans were heard to give tongue and charge forward, the former with the bayonet, the latter with all sorts of murderous-looking cutlery. The regulars fired another few rounds, and then joined in the charge; but the Turks did not await their coming—dropping their rifles they turned tail and fled, nor stopped until they reached the comparative safety of Preveza itself. The fighting had lasted exactly six hours: the Greek losses were 11 killed and 31 wounded; the Turks left 40 dead on the battlefield, not including the crew of the launch that was sunk. The Greeks captured the four Turkish cannon and a quantity of arms and ammunition, also a score of Turkish tents, which Manos' Cretans looted in approved Cretan style. Poor Manos, himself, coveted a pair of trousers from amongst the kit of a Turkish officer found in a tent; and he was quite proud of this piece of looting, for his own trousers had been torn by a couple of rifle bullets. He had indeed had a marvellous escape. Hit by three rifle bullets, it was only a finger on his left hand that had actually drawn blood. That night the Greek forces bivouacked on the site of the Turkish main positions.

In the meanwhile Preveza itself had been intensely moved by the happenings of the day. The population with the exception of the families of a few Turkish officials, was entirely Greek, and awaited the morrow with the utmost interest. The foreign consular body sat in solemn conclave, and considered the unenviable position of the 10,000 inhabitants if the Greeks pushed their advantage and attacked the town. They approached the Turkish governor and pointed out to him the horrors of street fighting if he persisted in resisting the victorious Greek advance. They painted in lurid colours the terrors of war.

The Turkish commandant lent a ready ear. His reply to the consuls, which I have seen, is rather a remarkable epistolary effort. "Although," he wrote, "I am determined to sacrifice the lives of my soldiers and to dispute the last trench so long as a man remains alive, I can appreciate your point of view, and accept your intervention." Whereupon the Consular body, preceded by a Turkish bugler and accompanied by a flag of truce, set forth along the road to Nikopolis. They seem to have been extremely nervous, for though they were given horses they preferred to walk afoot, so as not to attract the unwelcome attentions of the Greek sentries. However all went well, and about midnight, November 2nd to 3rd, the consuls met Major Spilladis and arranged for the surrender of the town and of the Turkish garrison.

The occupation of Preveza does much credit to Major Spilladis. Three-quarters of an hour after the Greek troops entered the town, every Turkish regular and the majority of the Albanian irregulars were safely aboard Greek ships in the harbour. The officers, to save their face, were allowed to walk aboard ship with their swords, but subsequently these were taken from them. The spoils of war were greater than had been anticipated, consisting not only of four 6-in. guns and four old Krupp field-guns, but of about £35,000 worth of other war material. The official entry of General Sapountzakis that afternoon was the occasion of the wildest enthusiasm on the part of the inhabitants, and the 850 Turkish prisoners steaming out of the harbour could hear the signs of popular rejoicing as the Greeks marched into the town.

That night, in Preveza, was one of wild rejoicing. According to the foolish but immemorial Greek custom, firearms were discharged casually all night long, and this fusillade was sometimes varied by the last stand of some Albanian brigand who had been in hiding and was tracked down by the populace and Greek irregulars.

Next day I left Preveza on board a ship bound for Kóprena, with all of Manos' band aboard, and I made an intimate acquaintance with these lawless mountaineers. It was a quaint voyage. The men fired off their rifles at anything they could see: seagulls, floating paper, and

what not. Poor Manos spent his time running up and down the deck cursing the men, but when he was in the bows the men in the stern started volley-firing, and *vice versa*. I have never travelled with such a shipload of undisciplined filibusters. They had had rather a good time at Preveza, and had looted all that they could find—rifles, watches, jewellery, and in fact almost anything. Manos very soon decided that two-thirds of his men were out for loot rather than for patriotic motives, and he arranged to get rid of about 180 of his 300 men on arrival at Kóprena, where the scallywags were left on board and taken back to their native country.

Really these Cretans were incorrigible: they would take anything on the offchance that it might be useful to them; they even took a couple of refills for an electric torch out of the saddle-bag of my bicycle—though what earthly use they could be to them I fail to imagine. When the Cretans returned to Arta every single man was carrying at least two rifles, his own and one captured from a Turk or looted from the armoury at Preveza: these looted mausers were marketed in the town next day at prices varying between £1 and £3, and no attempt was made by the authorities to check this illicit traffic in what was really Greek Government property.

From a military standpoint the fall of Preveza is only interesting from a negative point of view. Here was a port protected by forts which completely commanded the narrow entrance to the Gulf of Arta (the channel is rarely 100 yards wide), with a garrison of 600 regulars and 300 Albanian irregulars, a considerable store of military material, four 5-in. Krupp guns (which the Greeks eventually used with great success at the bombardment of Bizani), and four old Krupp field guns 8·8 millimeters calibre.

The only land approach was along the narrow isthmus, where determined men could have made a long resistance before falling back on the forts, which again, if provisioned, could have held out for a long time even against the Greek field guns. And yet six hours' fighting of a very mild kind was sufficient to induce the garrison to surrender this port which was so invaluable to the Greeks as a base.

Essad Pasha has told me that he himself did not learn of the fall of Preveza for some days after the event, and it was a bitter disappointment to him, for he expected the garrison to make a stout resistance which would have required siege operations on a small scale to break down.

Within twenty-four hours of the fall of Preveza the harbour was full of Greek shipping, and gradually it became the base of supplies for the Army of Epirus. The Kóprena and Agrinion line of communications was no longer used. Preveza is about twenty-one hours' steam from the Piraeus, and the channel has a depth of 14 ft. An excellent road runs northwards to Philippias (27 miles) and Yannina (65 miles), whereas the 10 miles of unmade track from Philippias to Arta could hardly be called a road even at the commencement of the war, and after two months it became impassable for anything on wheels. The fall of Preveza brought Philippias within two days of Athens (or twenty-six hours once motor lorries were started on the road), whilst *via* Agrinion and Khavasara and Arta there were at least twenty hours of boat and rail and three to four days of cartage along the road.

It will be seen how important the possession of Preveza was to the Greeks; and though the Turkish commandant is worthy of all contempt for the miserable fight he made, Essad Pasha himself, I maintain, made a great mistake in not placing a stronger garrison in the port, for until Preveza fell the Greek Army could not carry on serious operations against Yannina. We know that Essad had barely men enough at this time to man the Yannina defences, and could ill spare men for Preveza; but knowing the character of General Sapountzakis as he did, he could have felt sure that the Greeks would not attempt an attack on the Yannina defences until they had first taken Preveza. Had he placed two battalions of Redifs in the town and four field-guns, and properly entrenched the position of Nikopolis, I doubt if the Greeks would have taken Preveza before December 5th, and in that case they might have felt inclined to agree to the armistice arranged by their allies and the whole course of recent history might well have been very different.

The military student will appreciate the folly of leaving

an important strategical position (even if it is only important to the enemy) weakly held and under the command of an untrustworthy officer.

* * I am indebted to Lieut. G. Melas for the following extracts from his diary; it will be noted that in some details his account differs from the one I have given. I have chosen to append his as a footnote rather than to correct mine, although undoubtedly his version is the more accurate; but the comparison will enable the reader to note and appreciate the discrepancies in a description of the same action as written by a staff officer and by a war correspondent.

"*Nikopolis, Saturday, November 2nd.*—Leave about 5 a.m.; rain and mist. Our column consists of a battalion of infantry, a troop of cavalry, three field guns, a little corps of Epirots and 300 Cretan irregulars under Manos. We come in sight of Nikopolis about 7 a.m. No sign of our gunboats, which nevertheless had been ordered to support us. The enemy, notified of our presence, receives us with a triple fire: (1) from the sea (two little launches), (2) from the battery at Nikopolis which commands the road, and (3) from the Turkish infantry occupying the heights on our right. Taken by surprise, I gallop to give the order to the infantry column to extend into skirmishing order to the right against the Turkish infantry, whilst from the exact spot which they have just reached on the road the guns are brought into action front. The second shell destroys one of the launches (range about 2,500), the other launch takes flight.

"This unexpected triple fire had somewhat shaken us, but we rapidly resume the offensive. The Turkish infantry is dislodged from its first line, and I gallop off to find the guns which had remained on the road, and I lead them to the position indicated by our Commander; then in company with him we urge the infantry forward. Reaching the crest of the hill, Gabrielaki's [a staff captain, A.H.T.] horse is wounded in the knee; two minutes later mine falls stone dead, hit by several bullets, and in falling pins me under him. Our gallant C.O., seeing me in this dangerous fix, dashes up to me amidst a hail of bullets, and dismounting from his horse (also wounded at this precise moment) lifts up my horse and drags me free. Whilst I unbuckle my sword from the saddle, a bullet goes through my coat. We mount the horses of our orderlies and continue to direct the attack (10 a.m.).

"The Cretans at last make their presence felt, and the Epirots advance bravely along the seashore. The enemy dislodged from the ruins of Nikopolis (2 p.m.), are pursued by our infantry. Major Spilladis [the O.C.] exposes himself too much. Again and again I remonstrate with him. Our guns take up a new position to shell the hostile battery, whilst one by one we capture the ruins. About 4 p.m. we capture five Turkish cannon, and with them fire a few rounds on Preveza itself. At 5 p.m. the firing ceased, and I was preparing to snatch a little sleep, when the O.C. orders me to return to Arta at 7 p.m. by motor-car and arrange with General Sapountzakis for the bombardment of Preveza for the morrow. What a joy to find a motor car after a whole day of fighting on horseback, and to be the bearer of good tidings after having a horse killed under one! Our soldiers fought gallantly. (Was congratulated by my general!)"

CHAPTER VIII

THE GREEK MEDICAL SERVICE

IT was after the battle of Nikopolis that I first came into touch with the Greek medical arrangements both in the field and at the base, and so perhaps this chapter will not be out of place even if I do not limit its extent to the conditions existing at Arta.

Theoretically there should be a field ambulance and a field hospital attached to each Greek division, but in practice this was not the case, chiefly because the resources of the very limited budget were required more urgently for the combatant units, and there was no money available to spend on such luxuries as medical comforts. As a matter of fact what we should call the Royal Army Medical Corps arrangements for the Army of Epirus were roughly as follows :

Each regiment of three battalions had one doctor attached to it, reinforced by a reserve doctor on mobilisation ; the latter was a civilian surgeon whose knowledge of military surgery was limited to reading up sufficient to pass his examination some time in the past. The regimental doctors were assisted by an indefinite number of stretcher-bearers, men who, although they had no qualification or instruction in their duties, were given an arm badge with a red cross upon a white ground. By the simple process of placing this badge upon the arms of men who were of no good for anything else, the Greek Army recruited the whole of its personnel for its medical service stretcher-bearers, field ambulance and hospital orderlies. Although a few—very few—of these men were medical students, or had some slight qualification for their duties, the vast majority had had little previous training in medical duties. In 1912 Greece had devoted

all her energies to reorganising her combatant services, and had not yet had time to attend fully to details such as medical services.

Field ambulances, in the autumn of 1912, did not exist. Where roads existed and carts were to be found, the wounded were bundled into these, sometimes with a little straw. They were just the ordinary country carts of the peasant, with no seats, not even a board put across to improvise a seat, and usually innocent of springs. As the journey frequently occupied anything from six to thirty hours over the vilest of roads, the sufferings of the wounded are better imagined than described.

Again, there were no arrangements for feeding the wounded on their way down. The Greek soldier receives a loaf of bread every two days, and keeps the unexpended portion in his haversack. If a man was wounded when his haversack was empty, he would have to go without food of any kind until he reached hospital, as nobody had authority to issue bread to him. Literally hundreds of men lost their lives owing to the privations they endured whilst being brought down to hospital.

Again, the Greek soldier carries one blanket on his back. It usually happened that a wounded man had several hours to walk (or to be carried) before he could reach the road, and not unnaturally he left his kit and blanket behind him. There were no spare blankets for the use of the wounded, and in the bitter mountain passes, with snow or rain falling, the luckless men had to sit for hours and shiver. Many of the wounded contracted frost-bite.

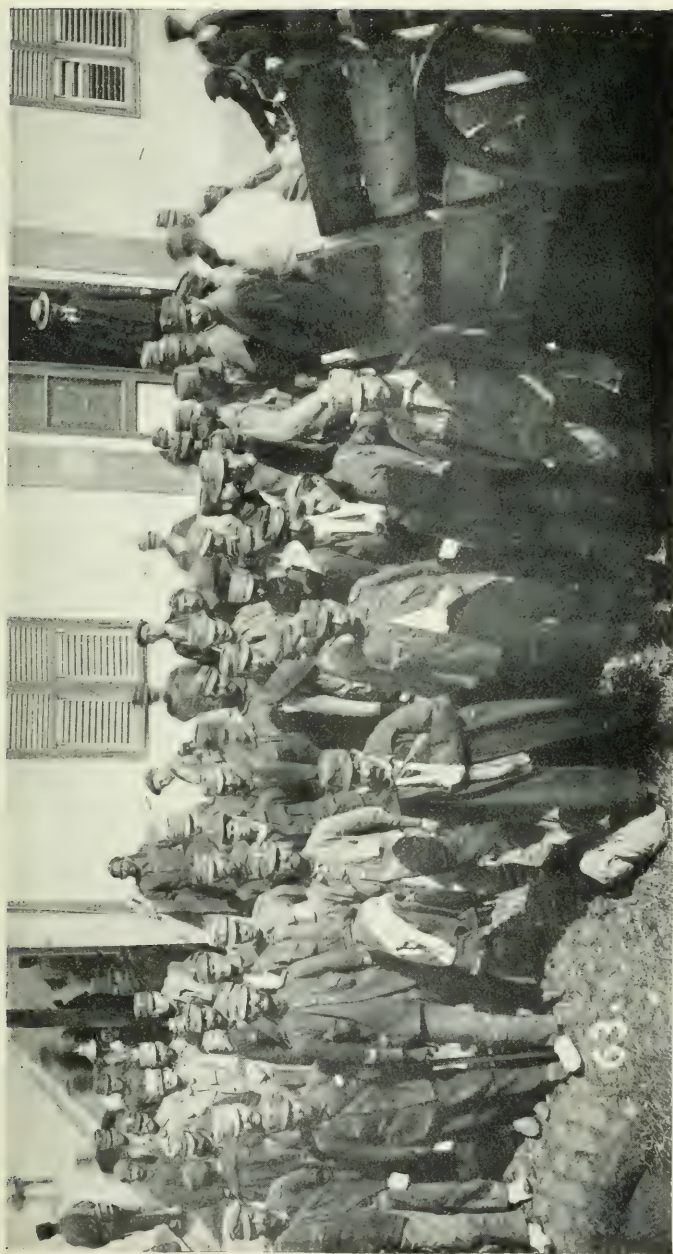
But it was only the lucky ones or the most grievously wounded who got a cart at all to travel in. Many had to ride on mule or donkey, but more still had to walk. I have seen a man come into hospital at Arta with a bullet through his lung who had walked for eleven hours through pouring rain on the plain and pelting snow in the mountains without food of any kind. He had not, in fact, had bread even for thirty hours, and for two days previous to being wounded he had been engaged in the firing line.

Up at the front there was no organisation, no signs of any forethought or prearrangement. One case came to

my notice which enabled me to offer a suggestion which was adopted later. A regimental doctor before the action of Pentepigardia informed the officers commanding companies of the spot where he intended to set up a dressing-station; but soon after the action began he found reason to move his station about a mile in another direction. He left nobody to show where he had moved to, with the result that dozens of wounded men spent their time wandering about looking for the station, and eventually either lay down exhausted on the bare mountain side and trusted to luck to be found, or else set off on foot, with wounds undressed, to Arta, thirty-six hours' march away! I suggested that use should be made of the little indication posts we use in our Field Ambulances, a suggestion which I believe proved helpful to many wounded men.

For several days and at all times I spoke to all officers I came in contact with on the terrible hardships suffered by the wounded in transit, and offered to fit up one of the ten motor-cars we then had at Arta for the use of the staff, as an ambulance. On November 9th General Sapountzakis gave me permission to work my will on a little Ford 20-H.P. car which was fitted with a small van body and was chiefly used to carry petrol and spare parts.

I was lucky to find a sympathetic ally in the chauffeur and also in Mr. Lascaris, the War Correspondent of the "Nea Ęmera," a leading Greek daily. Mr. Lascaris spoke both French and English, and the chauffeur (who, by the way, was also the owner of the car before he offered it to the Government and he was taken for service) spoke French, so we got along very well together. The blacksmith and the carpenter were very pessimistic, and the only way to get them to work at all, instead of discussing the probable failure of the venture, was to say that I didn't care whether it was a success or failure, but that mine was the responsibility, theirs only to do what they were told, while we stood over and watched them. By four o'clock that afternoon the transformation was complete; and in case the *modus operandi* may prove of interest to first-aid detachments in England I will give a short explanation.



GREEK WOUNDED PATIENTLY AWAITING ADMISSION TO HOSPITAL WHICH IS FULL.

The interior of the van was 5 ft. square, but the driver's seat, which ran right across the front, was built over the petrol tank, and was luckily upholstered. The roof, however, stretched right forward to the screen; thus on the opposite side to where the driver sat it was just possible to get in two stretchers one above the other. The roof and structure of the tonneau was strengthened with iron struts, and from these struts the upper stretcher was slung at each corner by four bands made by cutting one expended outer cover into four circles. This provided sufficient strength and elasticity to give greater relief from road jars. A similar kind of arrangement was used for the lower stretcher, save that the head of the stretcher rested on the unoccupied portion of the driver's seat. Four wooden stools for seated patients and a short ladder to facilitate entry and exit completed the outfit for six patients at a total cost of about £2. The best part of the arrangement was that in two minutes at most the car could be transformed at will into an ambulance or into a repair shop as before.

We got the two heaviest men we could find to do duty as patients, and with a volunteer ambulance squad we drove to the General's house to give a practical demonstration, after taking it for a trial spin which proved eminently satisfactory. The stretchers were by far the most comfortable berths in that car, not excepting the driver's seat. The General was good enough, after we had demonstrated the working of the slings to the assembled doctors, to come out on the balcony and thank me publicly; but I derive even greater satisfaction from the knowledge that my ambulance was in perpetual use thereafter, and alleviated a great deal of suffering. I know of two cases myself when the quick and easy transport it afforded saved the lives of grievously wounded men.

There was one little episode in connection with the fitting up of this ambulance that is amusing as indicative of Greek red tape. We had procured some red and white paint and daubed a large Geneva cross on each side of the tonneau. There was a terrible to-do over that cross, the military authorities saying that the ambulance belonged to them, but they feared that now the Red

Cross Society would attempt to annex it. I stood firm, however, and threatened to dismantle the whole thing rather than have the ambulance fired upon by the enemy, and in the end I won the fight, for I pointed out that so long as the wounded were brought down quickly it did not matter a scrap who got the kudos of doing it.

There was at this time (early November) only one hospital at Arta—the Military Hospital, which consisted of a big building capable of accommodating some 400 beds. This hospital had been in existence for twenty or thirty years as a civil hospital belonging to the Government; there was, therefore, no excuse for it not being in thorough working order. As a matter of fact it was, in every way and detail, a disgrace to civilisation.

There was no organisation or sanitation, no water laid on. The only water obtainable was from a well into which the drains ran. The sanitary arrangements were appalling, and the smell thereof pervaded the whole upper floor on which they were installed. No disinfectants were used there or elsewhere in the hospital, because “disinfectants smelt so unpleasantly”! The drain-pipe had sprung a leak, and leaked down the main staircase. The cooking arrangements consisted of a cauldron suspended over logs; there was no hot water or any means of getting it. In the operating-room there was no water at all. The hospital régime for patients consisted of a cup of Turkish coffee at 6 a.m., soup and bread at noon, and soup and bread again at 6 p.m. It mattered not what the patient was suffering from—fever, wound or exposure—that was his diet, to take or to leave. There was neither milk nor eggs—no medical comforts, not even vinegar for surgical purposes. At night the wards were indifferently lit by small petroleum lamps, but night and day all windows were kept hermetically sealed. Later on a couple of dozen night tables were discovered in store, but this was only after I had sawn up a score or two of rifle cases to serve the purpose.

Even the medical officers were callous in the performance of their duties. In-coming patients were laid out—or left standing—in rows in the draughty entrance-arch for hours before an officer appeared to allot them a bed, or, as sometimes occurred, to order the corpse to be

buried. The hospital orderlies were casual in the extreme, not to say inhuman. They cared far less for their patients than for their own individual comfort and convenience. At night, when I have visited the hospital, it was a revolting sight. The lights had been allowed to go out, the orderlies were asleep, many of the patients were lying on the floor, having fallen out of bed, incapable of crawling back, wallowing in a filthy mixture of dirt, cigarette ends and expectoration. None of the patients were ever washed, and the whole place was literally crawling with body-lice. Only once in two months, to my knowledge, were the floors washed, and that when the hospital had been temporarily emptied of patients.

Towards the end of November I was told that an Englishman was in hospital. I went and found him—a certain Mr. Alexander Damiano, of original Greek parentage, but who knew only a few words of the language. He was suffering from exposure and privation, which, on top of a tendency to consumption contracted as a sergeant of volunteers in South Africa, had brought him to a parlous state. I asked him what I could do for him. He had but two requests to make—a basin of water in which to wash, and permission to leave hospital and take a room for himself outside. With considerable difficulty I was able to gratify both these desires; and I subsequently heard that Mr. Damiano was invalided out of the Greek Army in order to undergo a cure in the Canary Islands; but the tales he told of the filth and neglect that existed in the Arta Military Hospital would be incredible if I had not been able to corroborate them by observation.

For a few weeks a ray of sunshine was brought into the lives of the wretched inmates by the ministrations of five lady nurses who volunteered to help look after the wounded. Mrs. Constantine Manos was one, and my wife another. They started in with the laudable intention of cleaning out this Augean stable, but in the end found that the utmost they could do was to procure milk and eggs for the more serious cases, and to serve a cheering cup of tea to all in the afternoon. Five nurses among four or five hundred patients is not much, but when these ladies left to assist in the hospitals at Philip-

pias their kindly ministrations were terribly missed by all the patients.

Later, about the middle of November, other and better-appointed hospitals began to arrive: the Greek Red Cross, the Italian Red Cross, and Princess (now Queen) Sophie's Hospital. Subsequently when headquarters moved to Philippias, we had no fewer than nine hospitals in that little town, each one well appointed and well kept and conducted; but even then the central administration was greatly at fault. Long loads of wounded used to arrive, but there was no one to direct to which hospital the various cases should be taken. Units fitted as field hospitals with all the necessary equipment and tents were kept at the base and told to establish themselves in some filthy building. At one time we had no less than fourteen hospitals in Epirus, many of them perfect individually in every detail, but owing to the lack of proper organisation the wounded suffered many unnecessary hardships before finding accommodation.

I cannot close this chapter without offering a sincere word of praise and admiration to the Royal Princesses, each one of whom organised and established one or more hospitals in Epirus, Macedonia, and Athens. No words of mine can do justice to their efforts and the amount of personal labour they expended. More than that, they set an example which the military authorities eventually had to follow. Greece owes a big debt to the devotion and labours of her royal family. By January the hospitals of the Greek Army had ceased to be a blot upon civilisation, and by the time that Yannina fell they were models of what hospitals in war time should be.

CHAPTER IX

PENTEPIGARDIA

IN order to understand the operations which commenced with the action of Pentepigardia and terminated with the bombardment of Bizani by the Greeks, reference must be made to the map, and a few words of explanatory detail are also necessary.

Two converging roads run northward through two well-defined valleys. The new road, an excellent piece of engineering with a good surface, starts at Preveza, and running through Philippias meets the old road at Khani Phwat Bey—the name of a wayside hostelry eleven miles by road from Yannina, and commanded by the guns of Bizani. The old road running from Arta to Pentepigardia has long since ceased to be anything better than an extremely difficult mule track, the surface of which is tortured by the remains of the stones with which the roadway was once paved. In neither valley is there any width of plain between the precipitous sides of the bare rocky mountains which rise on every side, towering up to 4,500 ft. Half-way between Philippias and Phwat Bey, by the village of Coclès, a mountain pass leaves the new road to join the old road at Pentepigardia; this takes about an hour and a half to accomplish on foot.

Pentepigardia itself is an old Venetian fort perched on the top of a conical kopje, which rises precipitously about 1000 ft. above the roadway; this roadway, bifurcating, squeezes round both sides of the hill which practically blocks the valley entirely. The track here is about 1,000 ft. above sea-level. In all this jumble of mountains, where the only vegetation is a low oak scrub occasionally varied by prickly bushes, there are few inhabitants. The villages which do exist are merely a collection of a score

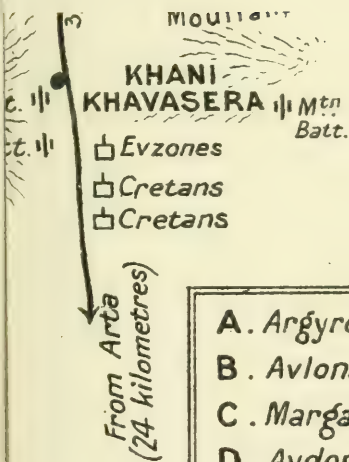
of hovels usually 100 yards or so apart from each other. The other names marked on most maps are those given locally to mountain spurs or accidents of the ground, whilst every here and there are to be found "khanis."

These "khanis" are reminiscent of the caravan routes in the East, consisting usually of a small stone house where passing travellers could sleep on the floor, get a glass of execrable wine, and perchance find some eggs and a piece of stale bread. In addition there is a high wall enclosing an acre or so of land, in which carts, cattle or carriages may spend the night, safeguarded from wolves or thieves; and sometimes in one corner of this compound there is a shed which affords shelter from the elements to the beasts of travellers. Nearly all the villages and khanis were burnt by the Turks as they fell back, and the blackened walls of the roofless houses lent a desolate appearance to an already sufficiently forbidding landscape.

On November 4th Essad Pasha, who had collected the various units of his Redif Division from their mobilisation centres, decided on a forward movement by both roads, the Redif Division on the old road, the Nizam Division on the new road. That night the head of the Nizam Division had reached Sefik Bey with four battalions and a battery, whilst the advance guard of the Redif Division, consisting of two battalions, bivouacked four kilometres south of Pentepigardia, at Khani Buracha.

The Greek Army, having disposed of Preveza, had also determined on a forward movement, and that same night three battalions were in occupation of the defile to the north of Philippias, whilst Colonel Yoanno, with four battalions of Evzones, three mountain batteries, and two battalions of Cretan Infantry, were near Khani Khavasera.

Next morning a Greek Evzone battalion occupied the heights marked 1250 metres on the sketch map and some four miles to the flank and rear of the Turkish left column, and this not unnaturally gave food for thought to the Turkish General Staff. But before entering into further details, it will be necessary to give the Turkish order of battle :



| | | | |
|--|---|---|---|
| A. <i>Argyrocastro Battalion of Redifs</i> | | | |
| B. <i>Avlona</i> | " | " | " |
| C. <i>Margariti</i> | " | " | " |
| D. <i>Aydona</i> | " | " | " |
| E. <i>Phillati</i> | " | " | " |
| F. <i>Premeti</i> | " | " | " |
| G. <i>Delvino</i> | " | " | " |
| H. <i>Leskoviki</i> | " | " | " |
| I. <i>Tepelene</i> | " | " | " |

W.

The Nizam (Active) 23rd (Independent) Division):

Jelal Bey Commanding

The 23rd Battalion of Chasseurs (in garrison at Yannina).

1st, 2nd, 3rd Battalions 67th Regiment and 67th Machine-gun Company (four Maxims).

1st, 2nd, 3rd Battalions 68th Regiment and 68th Machine-gun Company (four Maxims).

2nd, 3rd Battalions 69th Regiment and 69th Machine-gun Company (four Maxims).

(The 1st Battalion 69th Regiment had surrendered at Preveza).

1st, 2nd and 3rd Batteries 23rd Regiment Field Artillery.
1 squadron of Cavalry.

The Redif Division: Colonel Djavid Pasha Commanding
12 Battalions of Infantry from Epirus and Albania,
to wit:

The Battalions of Avlona, Margariti, Premiti, Melakas, Argyrocastro, Aydonat, Tepelene, (Yannina, left at Yannina).

Delvino, Philiatas, Leskoviki, Berat, which failed to concentrate.

General commanding Army Corps: Essad Pasha.

Chief Staff Officer: Major Phwat Bey.

The actual disposal of the troops on the night of November 4th-5th is shown on the sketch map opposite.

I myself was not present at the battle of Pentepigardia, but both Colonel Yoanno and Major Phwat Bey, the Greek Commander and the Turkish Chief of Staff, have given me their versions of the operations, which appear to me to be of more interest when described from the Turkish point of view, and that is the course I therefore adopt.

The Turkish commander, on November 4th, had appreciated the situation, and had given the Greeks credit for intending to move by the new (westerly) road, the one of which he was most nervous. On November 5th his western column pushed on, but in the afternoon the Greek and Turkish advance guards came into collision near the village of Coclès, and Jelal Bey, on the western

road, hearing the sound of guns on his left and being held in front, decided not to take further action until he had heard the result of the fighting on his flank.

Meanwhile at daybreak a battalion of Evzones had been located on the mountain marked 1,250 metres to the Turkish left rear at Valchoura ; but it was thought that two battalions of Nizam (1st and 3rd of 67th Regiment) at Pesta would be able to deal with these should they attempt to advance, and so the right column pursued its march. By 8 a.m. the 2nd Battalion 67th Regiment, sent to secure the left flank in the direction of Anoy, found the crest occupied, and came under infantry fire, whilst three battalions of Redifs (Premeti, Delvino and Leskoviki), with half the machine-gun company of the 67th Regiment who had been sent to secure Khalasmata Mountain, came under such heavy infantry and artillery fire that they were unable to make good their advance.

By noon it became necessary to reinforce this flank detachment if the Turks were to push on, and the Aydona and Philiati Battalions were ordered to make a flanking movement to the south. By 2 p.m. they deployed into line at 1,000 yards from the Greek positions, and for two hours they continued to attempt to advance, but they found they could make but little headway. Meanwhile the Turkish column which had arrived at Pentepigardia pushed forward ; the Avlona Battalion in the direction of Khani Khavasera, and the Argyrocastro Battalion towards Tirovo, with the intention of getting in touch with the western column on the main road about Coclès. The Turkish commander thus still had three battalions under his hand, and the 3rd Battery of the 23rd Artillery Regiment which came into action against a Greek mountain battery about K. Khavasera.

At 5 p.m. the 2/67 Battalion, engaged about Anoy Hill, reported that the Greek Evzone Battalion facing them had been reinforced by infantry and a battery of artillery, and it was decided to send the Tepelene Battalion to their support. At 8 p.m. Essad Pasha, who was at Khani Phwat Bey, learnt that the Greeks on 1250-metre Hill had also been reinforced, and it became clear to him that he must appreciate the situation afresh. It was evident that the Greeks were developing their attack

↓
From Arta
(24 kilometres)

| | | | |
|--|---|---|---|
| A. <i>Argyrocastro Battalion of Redifs</i> | | | |
| B. <i>Avlona</i> | " | " | " |
| C. <i>Margariti</i> | " | " | " |
| D. <i>Aydon</i> | " | " | " |
| E. <i>Phillati</i> | " | " | " |
| F. <i>Premeti</i> | " | " | " |
| G. <i>Delvino</i> | " | " | " |
| H. <i>Leskoviki</i> | " | " | " |
| I. <i>Tepelene</i> | " | " | " |

TO FACE PAGE 57.

against his left instead of against his right as he had feared. This was satisfactory, because, even if obliged to fall back, the terrain on this flank offered successive positions capable of defence, which was not the case along the main road. He had therefore the choice between throwing his right forward and assuming the offensive against the Greek left, or of bringing this column back to reinforce his own left. He eventually decided upon the latter course, chiefly because his field artillery would not have been able to co-operate in a forward movement in this roadless tangle of mountains, whereas it could be brought back *via* Khani Phwat Bey to strengthen his threatened left flank. Owing, therefore, to lack of mountain artillery, he was obliged to abandon the initiative to the enemy, and thereafter found himself obliged to conform to the enemy's movements. That evening he issued orders for the countermarch of his right column. The order was sent by two routes, in each case by an officer and ten men. The dismounted patrol reached Coclès at 10.30 p.m., having *en route* exchanged news with the patrol sent into Tirovo by Colonel Jelal Pasha, whilst the Cavalry patrol moving *via* K. Phwat Bey delivered its message to the Turkish commander at Buracha the next morning.

At 11 p.m. on the night of November 5th-6th, the right column (who, it will be remembered, had marched seven miles that morning, had been engaged with the Greeks about Coclès from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m., and had pushed on some four miles) were just settling down for the night when the order to countermarch reached them. All through the night the weary soldiery tramped up the ever-rising road back past Coclès village, where the villagers, who had watched the Greek repulse earlier in the day with sore hearts, gazed at the retreating column from the hill-top where they had sought refuge, and with glad cries returned to their homes, which, luckily, had only been pillaged and not burnt. As the column passed Khani Sefik Bey, that largish hostelry was fired, and the flames lit the darkness of the night with weird tongues of fire mirrored in the adjacent lake and waterfall. Then through the tortuous mountain passes, marching in single file, the four battalions made

their way through Buracha village to Buracha Khani, on the old road, which they reached about daybreak, and here the men lay down as they came up, and slept the sleep of utter exhaustion. Save for what they had pillaged in Coclès, they had not eaten for forty-eight hours. The cavalry squadron and the two batteries of artillery made their way to Pesta *via* Khani Phwat Bey, which was reached about 11 on the morning of the 6th. With the exception of the 2nd/68th left at K. Emin Aga, the Turkish forces were now all concentrated along the old road.

But whilst the Turks had been concentrating their forces the Greeks had had the same idea. The 15th Regiment (one battalion of which had just come up from Preveza, another having been engaged at Coclès on the previous day) was ordered, on the morning of the 6th, to make a flank march through the mountains and to join the Greek main forces at Khani Khavasera. To cover this movement the battery at this latter place opened a vigorous shell-fire upon the Turkish battery at Pentepigardia. At 2 p.m. the 15th marched in, but their column was seen by the Turkish staff.

The movement of this column is open to criticism, for they would have undoubtedly seriously embarrassed the Turks had they marched on Pentepigardia *via* Coclès and Tirovo, instead of by the route selected, and such a manœuvre would have had the additional advantage of protecting the new road and keeping it as a line of supply, or of advance or retreat. Had General Sapountzaki been acquainted with Stonewall Jackson's brilliant campaign in the Shenandoah Valley, he would have taken the still bolder course of marching the 15th Regiment (supported by the Cretans and a battalion of Evzones from Anoy, and three batteries of field artillery which he had in reserve near Khani Redin Pasha) direct upon Emin Aga and K. Phwat Bey, in which case the Turks about Pentepigardia and Pesta would have had to race back to Yannina. There would have been no further action at Pentepigardia, nor a month later at Pesta; probably, also, Bizani and Yannina itself would have fallen to the Greek arms within a couple of days, instead of after four weary months of campaign and bombardment.

But Sapountzaki was not the man to run the risk of having his centre crumpled up; nor was he himself present to take the decisive step. He was away back at Arta, twelve hours by the old road, or two hours by the main road had he elected to step into his motor car. This was the first great opportunity missed by the Greeks. Essad Pasha knew the risk he ran, but he had fought against Sapountzaki in the 1897 campaign and he knew his man; he also at that date had a very poor opinion of the Greek soldier, which he has had cause to alter since. However I must deal with the facts and not with the might-have-beens.

All that day (November 6th) the Greeks did nothing; the Turkish regulars, worn out by their night march, slept, save for the two battalions of the 67th Regiment (1st and 3rd) at Pesta, who were ordered to assault 1250-metre Hill. About 3 p.m. they deployed for their task, but they were never able to make any headway, and eventually, as the light failed, they drew off, leaving one officer and fifteen dead upon the mountain-side. The Turks, however, were beginning to have trouble with their Redif Battalions. Recruited from Albania and Epirus, these men had no idea of discipline, and could not speak or understand Turkish. As soon as night fell they had the happy idea of returning to the camp at Pentepigardia to sleep, and to shelter from the pouring deluge of rain, a proceeding which their officers (only five or six per battalion) were powerless to check. Phwat Bey, the Turkish Chief of Staff, conceived the plan of removing the tents, which were brought back to Khani Baracha; but even this failed to have the desired result, for that night the rain poured down from the black skies with tropical fury. In an hour the mountain-sides were scored with rushing streams, the old road became a river. On the upper mountain summits the snow fell thickly. It was a ghastly night for Greek and Turk alike, but the Greeks at least stuck to their posts. Not so the Albanians. In twos and threes they crept from their places in the firing-line down the mountain sides, the sound of their faltering footsteps drowned by the greater sounds of the storm. Next morning two battalions of regulars were ordered up to clear the summits of Khalas-

mata ; as they reached the firing-line of the Redifs they were to carry these forward with them, and all seven battalions were to take the Greek position at the point of the bayonet : that was the plan !

In point of fact they found no firing-line. The Redif Battalions were represented by forlorn groups of forty, fifty or sixty rain-sodden reservists ; the rest had all sneaked off in the night to the shelter of some sheds and houses between Pentepigardia and Tirovo. Attack was out of the question ; instead, it was the Greeks who took the initiative. Gallantly, but without cohesion in the comparative obscurity of the incessant downpour, the Evzones and 15th Regiment tried to rush the positions ; but a couple of machine-guns caught their line with enfilade fire and wrought sore havoc : after three gallant attempts they were obliged to desist, having lost heavily.

As the miserable day dragged on, the Turkish staff with their squadron of cavalry and a detachment of gendarmerie, rounded up the Albanian wastrels and drove them back to the firing-line. Every now and again a party would absolutely refuse, and then there would be bloody work at point-blank range. Phwat Bey tells me that he himself collected a thousand of these deserters and drove them back to their posts. That night a cordon of gendarmes and Nizam was stretched in rear of the Redif lines to keep the men to their posts, and several men were shot in their attempt to desert ; but notwithstanding one large party of a hundred or two managed to make good their escape, and were, by mistake, almost entirely wiped out by a battalion of regulars near Pesta, who mistook them for Greeks in the driving rain of the cheerless morn.

On the 8th the Turks again made one final effort to carry the Greek positions, an attempt which was doomed to failure. The men had no more stomach for fighting. Impatiently the Turkish staff awaited the mantle of night. Rain continued to fall heavily enough to keep the Greeks inactive.

When the welcome darkness at length came, the Redifs retired to Khani Phwat Bey covered by the Nizam battalions. It was found impossible to get away

the battery from Pentepigardia, and two other guns that had been rendered useless were also abandoned.

Apart from the losses already mentioned, the Turkish casualties were comparatively very slight during the four days' fighting, amounting only to 1 officer (a Lieutenant-Colonel) killed and 3 wounded, and 60 killed and wounded amongst the rank and file. The Greek losses, mostly from maxim fire, were slightly more. On the 6th one Greek battery alone had fired over 300 shrapnel, but only inflicted a loss of 1 killed and 2 wounded.

The Nizam Division withdrew to Pesta during the night. At daybreak on the 9th the Greeks pushed forward cautiously, but when within 5,000 yards of the Turkish artillery these fired upon them, and the advance ceased. For nearly a month the opposing forces made no further move: then was fought the battle of Pesta.

CHAPTER X

DAYS OF PREPARATION : HEADQUARTERS MOVE TO PHILIPPAS

IT was after the battle of Pentepigardia, when the wounded began to come in, that the inadequacy of the hospital arrangements was first forced upon my notice. The salient faults I have described in another chapter, but one or two bits of advice I was able to offer at this period: hot water and a cooking oven were badly wanted both at the Red Cross and at the Military Hospital; I fixed up a sort of combination arrangement of Aldershot oven and boiler, which was most useful.

About this time Arta began to be inundated with quite a lot of society ladies, who came to help in the various hospitals, and the little township became quite gay. At Mr. Karapanos' house, where the General and his personal staff were installed, there were also about eight ladies staying, and I have reason to believe that the General did not find their presence conducive to military efficiency. About December 3rd the rumour got abroad that Headquarters were to move to Philippas at once, and then arose a host of petty intrigues amongst the ladies to secure themselves rooms at Philippas as near the General's Headquarters as might be. Each lady wanted to be the first to follow Headquarters to its new location, and each schemed to that effect and to keep her dear friends in the dark as to her intentions. It was a pretty little comedy played amidst the tragedies of war—a comedy which was enacted twice later, when Headquarters moved to Yannina, and when again they left in haste for Athens, after the death of King George. The day that Headquarters actually moved was one of wild bustle in the morning and of deserted streets in the

afternoon. By this time the tracks across the flat plain to Arta had become impassable for motor traffic, and rickety cabs were requisitioned for the ten-mile journey, which occupied the best part of two and a half hours.

Philippias itself is a considerable village, as villages go in this part of Epirus, and consists of one main street composed of mud, and two or three side mud alleys—all bordered with one-storied booths or shops. There are half a dozen good buildings in the place, and these were requisitioned by the military authorities for the General, his staff, his offices, and for hospitals. When it rained, which it usually did five or six days a week, the streets were converted into quagmires of mud which varied between three and twelve inches in depth.

My wife, who was attached to the Swiss Hospital, which had by now arrived, was given an apartment in an empty and unfurnished four-roomed house. The Swiss Hospital nurses occupied another room. Mrs. Manzavino, a Greek lady who was working at the Swiss Hospital, and who afterwards lost her life in the most horrible motor accident, installed herself in a tiny closet on the ground-floor, whilst opposite was a room which nineteen Greek cyclist soldiers made their headquarters. The total floor area in the house could not have exceeded forty-three square yards, which was not much for twenty-five adults. But Philippias was hopelessly overcrowded, and I have known a general officer obliged to sleep on a narrow landing.

The ladies immediately set to work to make their rooms as attractive as possible with packing-cases, chintz, Turkey-red cotton and trophies of various sorts, and very pretty some of them seemed to us men when invited in to afternoon tea on returning from the front after the desolation of a *tente d'abris* on the mountain side. What did it matter if the brasier was made out of a petrol can, the floor-covering out of straw matting, or if the sofas were really only camp-beds in disguise? A tissue-paper shade would hide the gaudiness of the two-shilling chandelier, and even if the teapot was really a tin kettle, the tea it made was wonderfully comforting in those cold dark winter evenings.

About this time I was able to render General Sapount-

zaki some slight return for the many favours and courtesies he had shown me. Some twenty cycles had arrived for the use of the hospitals, and I volunteered to assemble the parts and show the men how to fix on a stretcher, a luggage-carrier, and such-like details, of which the cycles were innocent. I spent several days in thought and labour at the blacksmith's, but eventually turned out twenty excellent substitutes for stretchers and the same number of serviceable back-carriers. By means of a knife, a few stitches, and a little ingenuity, the clumsy equipment of the Greek soldier was rendered possible for cyclists' use, and finally I acted as riding-master and taught the men how to mount, dismount and remain in the saddle. I also taught them how to effect minor repairs and to mend punctures. It was rather a difficult business, because the men sent to the cyclists were mostly those whom their own company commanders wanted to get rid of, and were not remarkable for their intelligence or willingness to work. Out of deference to my ignorance of the Greek language the men had been chosen from those who could talk some foreign language, and I doubt if a more polyglot section was ever got together. A goodly sprinkling were Greeks who had been in America and "guessed and reckoned" with a true Yankee drawl. Two of them spoke French well, three I wrestled with in Italian, with two others Arabic was my only means of communication, and finally the Spanish and German languages were represented by one exponent each.

It was lucky on the whole that I am a bit of a polyglot myself, but I was glad of the opportunity to improve my Italian and German, of which I have never had more than a smattering. These cyclists were used later as military police, along the main road from Preveza to the front, rounding up stragglers, preventing the telegraph-line being tampered with, and keeping the immense mule and cart traffic to the right-hand side of the road, so as to allow more or less uninterrupted runs for the heavy motor traffic which was being built up. Later they were used as a fighting unit at the fall of Yannina, and were amongst the first to enter the town with the cavalry squadron. Later, attached to Headquarters of the Greek Army in Macedonia, they did good service

as staff orderlies and messengers. Doubtless they had learnt to ride by then.

The Greeks were now turning their attention to improved transit along the lines of communication, for not only were beasts of burden scarce, for the severity of the weather killed them by the score, but they afforded only a very slow and extravagant means of transport. The Government gradually acquired a miscellaneous collection of motor-lorries of varying makes and sizes, some of them of uncertain age, bought in great haste and mostly at extravagant prices from all the garages of Europe. During November the first consignments began to be put upon the road in Epirus, where they did excellent work. Each chauffeur had an assistant, who helped him in case of roadside trouble, and otherwise made himself generally useful in loading or unloading. These lorries, however, would have done infinitely better if they had been properly supervised, or the service organised on rational lines. For many months, however, there was no attempt at intelligent organisation; owing to the retention of bad drivers, lorry after lorry was smashed up, and as no proper repair shop had been established, the wastage became appalling.

As an example of how *not* to run a service, the motor lorry arrangements in Epirus are without rival. The chauffeurs and their assistants were put into engineer uniform, and a young engineer reserve officer was placed in charge of them. In civil life he was the managing director of the Athens Tramway Company, but apparently he had not learnt much from his experience in that capacity. There was no running schedule as to service, no organisation as to loading or the composition of the loads, no system of reporting upon breakdowns or repairs to be effected. One of these lorries, like Mr. Jerome's wandering train in the "Diary of Pilgrimage," just started away from Preveza when the chauffeur felt inclined, taking on board everything and everybody that was thrust upon it, and worked its way up to the advance lines at the sweet will of its driver. A stop would be made at Philippias for luncheon, and at wayside booths for coffee; stores would be picked up and jettisoned in the most casual way, and nobody ever had the

slightest idea where a lorry was going, what it had on board, or when it was likely to arrive anywhere.

The start of a lorry from Preveza was quite a comedy in itself. An artillery officer would try to load it with shells; then an officer of superior rank would come along, have the shells taken out and load it with bales of clothing or bread; other officers, according to their rank and temper, would fight for places for themselves and baggage; meanwhile merchants and soldiers would use their blandishments on the chauffeur to be allowed to have a ride. When the mixed cargo arrived at Philippias there would be another scene. The man who expected shells would curse the chauffeur, the man who expected clothing would curse the chauffeur, and the commissariat officer would curse the chauffeur; about a dozen other officers, civilians and ladies would also hold converse with him on the subject of certain commissions they had asked him to execute—everybody would get very hot and excited, until the chauffeur, weary of the wrangle, would philosophically put an end to the discussion by going off to have lunch.

Meanwhile the whole scene of Preveza would be enacted over again, but with complications; for here would be two distinct parties—those who wanted to go, or to send stores up, to the front—others who wanted to go back to Preveza. I think the funniest thing I saw throughout the war was a little comedy enacted by a captain who was deputising for the O.C. lines of communication, and a chauffeur by the name of Vlastos. Mr. Vlastos is a gentleman of Greek parentage who lives in England and came out as a volunteer; being accustomed to drive his own car at home, he was naturally turned on to drive a lorry. His knowledge of Greek was limited, but not nearly so limited as he often found it convenient to pretend. He elected to clothe himself in a mixed costume, which rendered him a somewhat amusing spectacle. Evzone shoes with pom-poms on them, a coffee-coloured wool cap when combined with a grease-stained uniform, a hard-bitten, humorous clean-shaven face, and hands grimy from much work on the interior of motors, made up the ensemble of his appearance.

On this particular occasion I was seated beside him

on the front of the lorry, which was just about to start, when the captain in question came rushing at us with gesticulating arms and crimson, unshaven face. The conversation which followed was carried on in Greek on the one hand and in English on the other; Vlastos all the time preserved the pleasant ingratiating smile of one who endeavours to explain himself in an alien language to a superior of weak intelligence, and the contrast between his words and his facial expression was comical in the extreme. This was how the conversation ran:

THE CAPTAIN (*gesticulating wildly*). Why in the devil did you not bring up shells? Shells! Shells! Do you understand?

THE CHAUFFEUR (*in English*). Because you are a dirty, unshaven martinet, and I dislike your manners and hate your habit of dancing the Tango.

THE CAPTAIN. Have I not told you a thousand times to bring nothing but shells? Shells! Shells! Don't you understand?

THE CHAUFFEUR (*with great solicitude*). When *did* you shave last?

THE CAPTAIN. The next time I will give you three—five—ten days' prison!

THE CHAUFFEUR. It's no use your dancing in front of this motor like a debauched turkey-cock, because you're liable to injury when I start.

THE CAPTAIN. Ten days' prison! Do you understand?

THE CHAUFFEUR. Out of the way! Mind your feet, you fluffy old idol. Pip! Pip! and saluting in the most deferential style, Vlastos let in his gears and rushed forward.

"The next time I come back the blithering idiot will give me a month of choky, I expect; all the same I'm sorry for the next Greek-speaking chauffeur who comes through," he said, turning to me.

"The pain of one chauffeur's behaviour will be lost in the pain of the next," I misquoted, as we dashed along.

About this period, also, I saw a lot of Mr. Parmenides, a man who, though he will never forgive me for mentioning the fact, I consider to be one of the heroes of the war. Speaking English perfectly, an English subject and

married to an Englishwoman—I beg her pardon, a Cornishwoman—Mr. Parmenides volunteered to serve in the Greek Army. He was invited, instead, to attend to the distribution of woollen comforts to the troops, which charitable-minded people had provided. Day in and day out, wet or fine, this gallant gentleman devoted himself to treading the mountain-paths with a little convoy of mules loaded with flannel shirts and woollen socks. These he in person distributed to the frozen soldiery. Though enjoying anything but robust health himself, he never faltered for a moment in what he felt to be his duty. Exposed to the enemy's fire, hunger, fatigue, and the bitter cold of an unsheltered sleeping-place on the mountain side, he worked loyally and unostentatiously through many months until the war was over. There is not a soldier in the Army of Epirus who will not remember with gratitude the splendid, though unromantic work he did so well.

After the fall of Salonika and the entry of Florina, it was decided to reinforce the Army of Epirus from the troops in Macedonia, and it was amidst great welcoming scenes that the battalions of the 2nd Division marched through Philippias on their way to the front.

Other units, too, had come to swell our army ; amongst them some 400 Greeks from the United States, who, on the first news of war, had returned to take service. It appears that in New York these men were allowed to form a corps, and to put in some elementary drill ; on their collars they bore the initials " N.Y." The Garibaldians in their preposterous scarlet shirts also arrived, and were welcomed ; whilst two or three newly-formed independent battalions of infantry, formed out of the surplus of reservists and recruits in the various recruiting centres, were added to our strength. It was a busy time of preparation.

CHAPTER XI

THE BATTLE OF PESTA (DECEMBER 12TH, 1912)

AS has been stated in the previous chapter, the operations of the Greek main Army had come to a satisfactory conclusion in Macedonia by the occupation of Salonika and Florina towards the end of November, and although the Army of Epirus had been strengthened by the advent of two or three improvised units and several thousand irregulars, it was felt that no real headway could be made in the campaign without further regular reinforcements. The 2nd Division was therefore embarked at Salonika and brought round by sea to Preveza with as little publicity as possible. The Division was by no means complete, for instead of being sent up to the front as a complete unit, three battalions had been detached for duty in the Ægean Islands, and another two battalions with two batteries had been engaged upon an abortive attempt to effect a landing at Santi Quaranta and march upon Yannina *via* Delvino. Between December 5th and 8th, however, the remaining four battalions were landed at Preveza with four batteries of field artillery, and marched *via* Philippias along the main road up to the front at Sefik Bey under General Kalari.

On December 9th the Legion of Garibaldi¹ made an ill-considered attempt upon Driskos (between Metsovo and Yannina), and were only saved from absolute annihilation by the timely aid of a Greek regular battalion. On the 10th and 11th this force was pursued by the 19th Turkish (Nizam) Division, under Faik Bey, some 5,000 strong, who had fled from the Servian armies after the battle of Monastir: this Division had reached Yannina on the night of December 9th, after a twelve-days'

¹ See commencement of Chapter XIII.

march, but at once proceeded in pursuit of the Greek mixed detachment.

During the month which had passed since the battle of Pentepigardia, the Greek Army had increased from 10,000 to close upon 20,000 men, of whom some 7,000 were irregulars, to which was added the 2nd Division. But the Turkish Army had also been strengthened very considerably. Not only had many of the reservists for the Nizam and Redif Battalions come in, thus increasing their effectives, but 2,000 reservists from Asia Minor, originally destined for transport services, had arrived, and were drafted into the battalions to strengthen the effectives. Several bands of Albanian brigands had also come into the theatre of operations, and were keeping the Greek irregulars occupied in defending the villages throughout the countryside. But a far more serious reinforcement than this was on its way down. The Turkish Army defeated by the Serbs had dispersed after the battle of Monastir, and the remnants were on their way south. True, they had left their artillery behind them, but they nevertheless were a very welcome addition to the forces of Essad Pasha.

The first of these units to arrive was the 19th Division, under Faik Bey, 5,000 strong, on December 9th. Djavid Pasha followed, with the 20th and 21st Divisions, another 6,000 men, on the 13th; and on the same day another Djavid Pasha, the same who later escaped to Albania, who was between Yannina and Korytsa with some 12,000 men of the 16th, 17th and 18th Divisions, made known his presence to Essad Pasha. If the Greeks had hoped to gain anything in comparative strength by this period of waiting, their hopes were doomed to failure, for a rough estimate of the strengths of the two armies would work out as follows :

November 9th :

| | | | | |
|------------------------------|---|---|--------|----------|
| 23rd Nizam Division | . | . | 2,500 | } 7,500 |
| Yannina Redif Division | . | . | 5,000 | |
| Greek 8th Division, Regulars | . | . | 10,000 | } 12,000 |
| „ „ Irregulars | . | . | 2,000 | |



72] MAJOR (NOW COLONEL) ALI PHWATT (FOUADD) BEY.

December 9th :

| | | | | |
|---------------------------|---|---|--------|--------------------|
| 23rd Nizam Division | . | . | 3,900 | } 35,900 Turks |
| Redif Division | . | . | 6,000 | |
| 19th Nizam Division | . | . | 5,000 | |
| Albanian Irregulars | . | . | 3,000 | |
| Other Divisions coming up | . | . | 18,000 | |
| | | | | |
| 8th Division Regulars | . | . | 13,000 | } 25,000 Greeks |
| 8th Division Irregulars | . | . | 7,000 | |
| 2nd Division (part of) | . | . | 5,000 | |

The Turkish commander, however, found himself tied to the defensive because he had no mountain artillery, and only six batteries of field artillery; he could, however, hope with the large number of immobile guns in the Yannina defences to render an excellent account of himself. The Greeks, on the other hand, hoped by making haste at this eleventh hour to capture Yannina before these reinforcements from the north could join up. This was why the abortive offensive towards Driskos was undertaken on the 9th, and this certainly had the effect of drawing off the majority of the 19th Division from the main operations, whilst the equally abortive Greek expedition to Santi Guaranta called down the remainder of the 19th Division towards Delvino. It was a question whether in the meanwhile the Greek main Army, reinforced by the bulk of the 2nd Division, could break through the Turkish forces before their reinforcements arrived. The Battle of Pesta was the initial move of what should have been a rapid and relentless advance. Being neither rapid nor relentless, it failed, and although the Greeks won the battle it did them very little good, as will hereafter be seen.

It will be remembered that the Redif Division somewhat disgraced itself at Pentepigardia; it was therefore sent back to Bizani, with the exception of the Aydonat and Tepelene Battalions. These, together with the remaining eight battalions of Nizam (the Chasseurs were still in garrison at Yannina, and the $\frac{1}{89}$ had surrendered at Preveza) and four field batteries had had five weeks to prepare their positions on the line Pesta—Emin Aga. Major Phwat Bey was entrusted with the

command of this force. He is a man of thirty-two years of age, who has seen service in Tripoli and been military attaché in Rome. Later, when he was a prisoner of war, for several weeks I had long daily conversations with him on military subjects, and he strikes me as an extremely able and energetic officer, who is quite up to date in his military knowledge.

On December 9th, 10th and 11th, the Greek artillery engaged the Turkish artillery in a somewhat useless long-range duel, in which the Turks lost three killed and two wounded, and the Greeks one wounded.

The Turkish positions, which were joined up by telephone wires, are shown on the attached sketch, which Phwat Bey himself has kindly sketched for me. The Greek plan of operations was as follows :

- (a) Four Battalions of Evzones, assisted by one mountain battery on 1250-metre Mountain, were to turn the Turkish left.
- (b) One Cretan Battalion and one Battalion 15th Regiment were to hold the hills and church about Sklivani.
- (c) One Battalion 15th Regiment, some 500 Greek-Americans and other details were to advance as far as possible from Buracha—these last two being supported by a mountain battery and field battery near Sklivani, and a field battery near Valchoura. On the eastern side of 540-metre Hill, which cut the Greek Army in two, were—
- (d) At Sefik Bey four 5-in. Krupp guns, two batteries of field-guns in position, and three batteries of field artillery (held in reserve because no positions could be found for them), one battalion of Cretans and one battalion of the 15th Regiment.
- (e) Four Battalions of the 2nd Division, together with one mountain battery who were ordered to march *via* Melihovo and attempt to turn the Turkish right. These two flanking movements (a) and (e) were timed to take place simultaneously at noon.

The morning of December 12th broke clear but frosty,



**KHANI
KHAVASERA**

From Arta
(24 kilometres)

- | | | | | |
|------------|---|---|---|---|
| A . | <i>Argyrocastro Battalion of Redifs</i> | | | |
| B . | <i>Avlona</i> | " | " | " |
| C . | <i>Margariti</i> | " | " | " |
| D . | <i>Aydona</i> | " | " | " |
| E . | <i>Phillati</i> | " | " | " |
| F . | <i>Premeti</i> | " | " | " |
| G . | <i>Delvino</i> | " | " | " |
| H . | <i>Leskoviki</i> | " | " | " |
| I . | <i>Tepelene</i> | " | " | " |

n. S.W.

such a day as we sometimes get in February in England. The soldiery, who for many weeks now had accustomed themselves to endure the hardships of the bitter nights spent with no other shelter than one thin blanket and a canvas *tente d'abris*, were just endeavouring to coax a little warmth into their hands and feet by stamping about in the first rays of the rising sun, when the order reached the Greeks to prepare for battle.

At 8 a.m. the Evzones along the mountain slopes of Valchoura and 1250-metre Hill opened a persistent but ineffectual rifle fire at 1,200 yards, to which the Turks, being short of ammunition, did not deign to reply. Soon after 9 a.m. the Greek artillery began to play on the Turkish positions, and the Turkish batteries took up the challenge.

The two guns of the 2nd Battery of the 23rd Artillery Regiment (shown at $\frac{2}{23}$ on the sketch) tried to find the Greek battery at Valora at 4,000, 4,200 and 4,500 yards. The remaining two guns of this battery ($B_{\frac{2}{23}}$) opened upon the infantry in their trenches and sangar beside the church near Sklivani at 2,000 to 1,700 yards first with shell, and subsequently with shrapnel, when it was seen that their shells would not explode. The first battery ($\frac{1}{23}$) divided its attention between the two Greek batteries above Sklivani, and the 5th Battery helped them at 5,500 and 6,000 yards, an extreme range for the Turkish guns.

At ten o'clock the officers in the Turkish artillery observatory on 750-metre Hill detected the advance of the Battalion of the 15th Regiment moving north from Valora to Buracha through the ravines, and $\frac{2}{23}$ B. fired upon them with shrapnel, without, however, having any effect; this battalion, deploying into line on the two hills south of Buracha, engaged $\frac{2}{67}$ Turkish Battalion at about 900 yards range.

The fire directions were, however, faulty, and the ranges being overestimated, the musketry was harmless. Half an hour later, however, the Americans (Greeks from the States), strengthened by other details, were pushing up to reinforce the 15th Greek Regiment, when all the Turkish artillery concentrated upon them and upon Buracha, and the advance was completely checked,

and the musketry fire kept subdued. It was, it will be remembered, no part of the Greek plan to push home this attack. By noon the fight appeared to die down, and for a while there was no firing at all. It was the lull before the storm.

For soon after midday two battalions of indefatigable Evzones came curling round Valchoura Hill, and changing direction to the left, deployed into line facing the Turkish trenches held by the $\frac{3}{67}$ Regiment. Skilfully making use of the dead ground, they escaped the attentions of the Turkish artillery, and entered into a hot musketry fight with their enemy at 700 yards.

An hour later (1 p.m.) another column of two battalions of Evzones debouched from the defile between Sklivani and 1250-metre Hill. The Turkish gunners $\frac{2}{23}$ B. and $\frac{5}{23}$ picked them up, and poured shrapnel and percussion shells upon them, but the gallant mountaineers did not waver for an instant. From column of route they broke into single file, and springing like the goats of their own home mountains from rock to rock along the precipitous slopes of the great mountain, they raced right across the Turkish front. Two maxims of the 67th Regiment rattled away at them at 2,500 yards, but with no effect, as the target they offered had no depth. It was a daring movement, and such a one as no other troops in the world, I believe, would have been able to make, save perhaps the Ghurkas. For an hour and a half, over the appalling terrain, in full view, they streamed in single file across the Turkish front, to eventually hurl themselves in line against the 1st and 3rd Battalions of the 67th (3.15 p.m.).

Meanwhile, however, one of those little incidents which sometimes have such great results in war occurred on the Turkish left. By 1 p.m. one of the Turkish guns of $B_{\frac{2}{23}}$ had been put out of action by a Greek shell from Valora; Phwat Bey had become aware of the pressure being brought to bear upon his left, and he dispatched one of his battalions from the General Reserve (the Tepelene Redif Battalion) to strengthen his flank. To avoid the Greek artillery fire, they were obliged to go up the steep slopes of 750-metre Hill (a slope of one in two), and it took them an hour to reach the top of the

climb. They formed up under the ridge and commenced the descent. They had been ordered to report to the O.C. 67th Regiment, who commanded the left sector of the Turkish defence. But at 1.30 p.m. this officer became the victim of an unaccountable fit of nerves. His left rear, at the spot shown x—x on the sketch, rested on the top of a precipice 250 ft. high, but he got it into his head that the Greeks were about to scale the precipice and attack him here. He had a company and a half (about 220 rifles) in the firing-line, and his other company and a half in reserve as shown (the Nizam battalions only boasted three double companies per battalion). Obsessed by his idea, he took one company and one gun (of $\frac{5}{33}$), and himself went and took post on the edge of this precipice. The result was that when the O.C. $\frac{3}{67}$, who was by now sore pressed by the Evzones in his front, sent back for the reserve company and a half, the colonel could not be found. Three times he sent urgent messages within a quarter of an hour. At last the colonel, satisfied that he had struck a mare's nest, sent word back that the reserves would be sent up at the double. But it was too late. Ere the messenger got back the $\frac{3}{67}$ had broken and were falling back slowly, pursued by the Evzones. The Tepelene Battalion, coming down from 750-metre Hill, had seen how things were going, and when they reached the ravine at the base, they split into two halves and took post as shown by $\circ^{\uparrow}\circ$ on the map.

The Evzones, however, came on slowly but victoriously and persistently; the débris of the $\frac{3}{67}$ were turned into a rabble flying before the Greek bayonets. The gunners of the 5th Battery stood their ground and poured shells into the advancing Greeks until the latter were within 400 yards; and then, taking the sights of their guns and bulging the elevating gear, they took to horse and fled. It must be noted these guns could not have been saved, as there was no road. The guns had been man-handled over the rock-strewn ground into their positions with immense labour and difficulty. By 3.30 p.m. the Turkish left had ceased to exist. Its remnants were in full flight to Koritiani and to Khani

Phwat Bey. The Greeks had occupied their positions and captured four guns. At 3.15 the position of $\frac{1}{87}$ had become untenable: the Evzones had deployed into line, and cleared them out at the point of the bayonet.

At 4 p.m. Phwat Bey received a telephone message that a large force of the enemy (the 2nd Division) were moving against his right *via* Melihovo. He knew that his left had broken, but he still determined to make the best of a bad job, and to re-establish his line from Pesta to Iphthalia. He sent his remaining reserve battalion, $\frac{1}{88}$, to hold 750-metre Summit, $\frac{3}{88}$ with the machine-guns of the 67th were withdrawn to Pesta, and $\frac{2}{23}$, $\frac{2}{23}$ B, and $\frac{1}{23}$ were ordered to turn their fire on the Greek right, *i.e.* on 1250-metre Hill.

We must now glance at the Greek left centre and flank by Sefik Bey. The batteries in the centre about Sefik had spent the morning in a desultory artillery combat with the enemy's battery about Iphthalia at a range of 6,000 yards. The 2nd Division started upon its difficult mountain route at noon, and reached Melihovo about 2.30 p.m.; until then their advance had been totally unobserved by the Turks.

The road from Khani Emin Aga to Khani Iphthalia rises incessantly in its length of 3,500 yards; on the right are the steep sides of Moulais Mountain, on the left a sheer precipice of 400 or 500 ft. into the narrow valley. On the farther side of the valley rises precipitously a snow-capped range of mountains: it is on the top of these mountains that Melihovo village is perched, some 2,000 ft. above Emin Aga and the valley.

General Sapountzakis had got it into his mind that the first axiom of mountain warfare was to seek the highest summits, wherefore he sent the 2nd Division climbing up the mountain side to Melihovo in order to strike the Turkish right. But the General seems to have overlooked two essential points: firstly, that to turn an enemy's position one must either pass behind and around his flank, or else if one strikes the flank itself the attack must be pressed home relentlessly. Secondly, that the Turkish right flank rested upon a precipice, and to attain it his column would have to descend into the valley, wherefore it was hardly worth while to go up into

the clouds first. The movement of the Greek 2nd Division was ill conceived. It was either too wide or not wide enough. Time did not permit of a wider turning movement, therefore the 2nd Division should have been content to move along the main road and strike the Turkish flank frontally. The Greeks here would have been in overwhelming numbers (7,000 infantry against one depleted Turkish battalion), and moreover had their attack succeeded in carrying Iphthalia they would have been nearer to Yannina (and by an excellent road) than any portion of the Turkish Army.

Both Essad Pasha and Phwat Bey had always this probability at the back of their minds: even at Pentepigardia it was their obsessing fear. That is why Phwat Bey held his reserve battalions where he did until forced by circumstances to disperse them to his left. However, to return to facts.

At 2.30 p.m. the 2nd Division had reached Melihovo unobserved: the Turkish guns at Iphthalia offered a tempting target to the subaltern commanding a section of the mountain battery that accompanied the Division. He opened fire. Immediately the Turkish guns switched on to this new target, and their shrapnel harassed the Division badly on the narrow lap of the mountain. There were many casualties.

The Greek Division was between the devil and the deep sea. If it stayed where it was it would lose many men; if it went forward and attacked the Turkish position, perched on its inaccessible mountain, it would assuredly suffer rebuff. It was in a cul-de-sac, and for all the good it did might just as well have never been present that day. At 4 p.m. I myself was present at the Greek centre, on a spur of 540-metre Hill. The position was painfully obvious. Three officers of General Sapountzakis' staff were with me, and in my excitement I forgot myself sufficiently to beg them to get the General to push forward his left centre along the main road towards Emin Aga and Iphthalia the while he brought the 2nd Division back to support them.

I admit that I myself was itching with a fever for decisive action; the whole situation was abundantly clear. A determined attack on Iphthalia was obviously

essential. The staff officers suggested I had better go and talk to the General myself. I found my way down to the main road between Sefik and Emin Aga, and found the General (4.30 p.m.) walking up and down the road, amongst the motor-cars and heavy guns just beyond Sefik. The sun had already sunk behind 540-metre Hill—in another half-hour night would be upon us. As tactfully as possible I ventured to presume that he was arranging a night advance along the main road, and an attack when the moon should come out at midnight; but alas for my hopes! he told me he contemplated nothing of the sort. He proposed to hold his positions until the morrow, and then push out his squadron of cavalry to reconnoitre Iphthalia and perhaps advance. It was a bitter disappointment to me, who felt instinctively that a determined forward movement would perhaps place Bizani and Yannina itself in Greek hands within twenty-four hours.

I was told that the men were weary; that the 2nd Division could not move forward in the dark; that the General awaited news of the advance of his right centre; and finally I saw the General get into his motor car at 5.30 p.m. and drive off to Philippias to dinner and to bed.

Meanwhile the extreme Greek right had been equally inactive. Having taken the Turkish guns and positions, they seem to have reached the summit of their ambition: they were, so I am told, waiting for the turning movement of the 2nd Division to complete itself. Thus at 4 p.m., just when complete victory was within their grasp, the Greeks ceased their advance. If even the splendid brigade of Evzones had pursued the fugitives through Koritiani to Khani Phwat Bey, much might have been accomplished. But nothing was done.

At 5 p.m. Essad Pasha informed Phwat Bey by telephone that the remnants of the 1st and 3rd Battalions of the 67th and of the Tepelene Battalion had reached Khani Phwat Bey, and were being rallied; also that three battalions of Redifs were being sent from Bizani to the same place to support them. At nightfall the Turkish commander drew back his troops out of Pesta village on to 750-metre Hill, and prepared to offer battle on the morrow

on the line 750—Iphthalia, drawing back the whole of his line of battle. Shortly afterwards (5.15 p.m.) he was told by telephone that Faik Bey, with his (19th) Division, had concentrated after the Turkish success at Drisko, and would march to support him; but at 7 p.m. he was told that it would take Faik Bey twenty-four hours to reach him, and he was therefore ordered to retire on to Bizani. Very skilfully, it seems to me, he drew off his men and marched them on Khani Phwat Bey, the head of his column reaching that place at 9.30 p.m., whilst at 11 p.m. the $\frac{2}{7}$ from Iphthalia, acting as rear-guard, marching through Kaneta reached Khani Phwat Bey.

When the Greek Army awoke next morning there was not a Turk within ten miles of them. Colonel Yoanno, commanding the Greek right, pushed forward on his own responsibility and cleared the country down to Khani Phwat Bey, but on the left we had to await the arrival of the General in his motor-car. At 11.15 he arrived. At noon he decided to send his squadron to reconnoitre. At 1.30 the squadron returned and reported all clear, and that night the centre and 2nd Division bivouacked at Emin Aga with its advance guard at Kaneta.

I do not know if I have told the tale sufficiently plainly for readers to appreciate the fatal delays in the Greek advance: the thirty precious hours wasted by the 2nd Division; the failure of the Evzones to follow on the heels of the men who were running away from them. The following, however, I have been told in all sincerity by the Turkish commander.

1. That if, at 3.30, the Evzones, unhampered by awaiting the results of the action of the 2nd Division, had pursued their advantage to Koritiani and even Bizani, the Turks would have been obliged to leave all their guns and extricate their infantry at the double, and that perhaps even Bizani itself might have fallen into their hands; or,

2. Had the 2nd Division and Greek left centre attacked at any time on the 12th December along the line Lagatora, Iphthalia, Moulais, the Turkish artillery would have fallen into their hands and the infantry would have had great difficulty in extricating itself *via* 750-metre Hill; or

3. Had a movement on the night of the 12th-13th been undertaken, the Turkish retreat might well have developed into a rout, and a vigorous offensive at dawn would have doubtless given Bizani into the Greek hands. Such were the lost opportunities.

As it was, the Turks lost four guns of the 5th Battery and abandoned two guns of the 2nd Battery which had been rendered useless by the Greek artillery fire. Their other losses were limited to 2 officers and 52 men killed and 2 officers and 109 wounded. The Greek losses were slightly less.

One great fault in the Greek arrangements was the lack of communication between the two flanks and the General. The General should have taken post on 540-metre Hill, and from there by telephone or signallers he could have controlled his army. Down in the valley on the main road he could see nothing, save the slow progress of his 2nd Division, and he was absolutely out of touch with his victorious right. The Greek soldiers fought, as they had always fought, with admirable courage and steadfastness of purpose, but they were held back by their general. The Turks fought, it seems to me, with splendid determination. It is worthy of remark that the three battalions so badly mauled by the Greek Evzones, after fleeing over some ten miles of rocky country, rallied themselves within two hours at Khani Phwat Bey, ready to fight again.

The Turkish commander seems to have fought his battle with astounding determination and sangfroid, and effected a masterly retreat at night with beaten troops over a difficult country in an orderly manner deserving of the highest praise.

The Greek commander appears to have contravened every conceivable military rule. Having pinned his faith upon a synchronised movement of both flanks, he took no steps to assure their synchronisation. He held the bulk of his troops in reserve, and lacked the courage to employ them at the critical moment. He made no use of his overwhelming superiority in artillery. It was a battle in which every available staff officer should have been employed in keeping the various parts of the battle line in co-operation with each other, yet to my know-

ledge only one officer was given this task. The only redeeming feature in the whole battle was the bravery of the Greek troops on the right. As a lesson to military students, the Battle of Pesta is the finest example that I know of what *not* to do and how *not* to do it.

CHAPTER XII

IN FRONT OF BIZANI

IT was on December 14th, the second day after the battle of Pesta, that I got up to Kaneta and had my first glimpse of the redoubtable Bizani. The General had placed a bell tent, captured from the Turks, at the disposal of Monsieur Lascaris of the *Nea Emera*, and of three Greek deputies, one of whom was a poet; and I was invited to join them and teach them the rudiments of life under canvas. Kaneta is the name given to a tiny stone hut which stands by the roadside at 11 miles from Yannina and 28 from Philippias; the road here reaches its highest altitude—it is the summit of the pass. Two kilometres lower down, the road, leaving the mountain pass behind, touches Khani Phwat Bey, and runs across the plain skirting the base of Bizani Mountain to Yannina.

At this time the Greek forces pushed forward to the limit of the mountain-land and there established their outposts, whilst on a convenient strip of flat about the size of a tennis lawn, the Greek heavy battery was established, half-way between Kaneta and the outposts. It was beside the big guns that our tent was pitched. Every day the General and his staff used to come out for two or three hours in motor-cars and to have a look round, whilst the company of sappers, bivouacked at Kaneta, spent its time in cutting accommodation paths in all directions over the scrub-covered rocky mountains.

During the few days that we lived together in our tent it was rather a struggle for existence. I, feeling myself a stranger, did not exactly like to "boss the show," and the others lived a hand-to-mouth existence on casual tins of sardines and hunks of bread that happened to



ATHENIAN LADIES AS NURSES AT PHILIPPIAS.



MY TENT HOME AT KANETA, WINTER 1912-1913.
Part of Bizani ridge in distance.

come their way. At night they used to light a fire in the tent—imagine a greenwood fire in a bell tent! Nobody ever thought of rolling up his blankets in the morning, and rubbish was thrown just outside the flap, with the result that at the end of forty-eight hours we were in a state of utter piggery. Added to this, the poet snored! We were not a happy family. During the daytime, when we were all up in the mountains watching operations, the Turks used to shell the heavy battery, and one evening we came back to find our tent ventilated by a Turkish shell which had, luckily, failed to explode. Those four days at Kaneta were by no means pleasant, for we were not a united mess, and we had made no arrangements. Those were lean days of unappeased hunger. Now and again the chauffeurs used to bring us up something edible from Philippias, but even this we used to squabble over. A hungry stomach renders a man unthinkably prehistoric!

My parliamentary companions were also dabbling in journalism, and they used to sit up at night with a candle stuck in the end of a bottle, writing poetical descriptions of the mountain scenery; but nothing less than a threat of physical violence would induce them to get up in the frosty morning to go and get a supply of water at the spring, some 800 yards distant.

Greek journalism is somewhat in an elementary condition, and the rivalry between the various papers and correspondents is still of a personal nature. The pet *bête noire* of my friend M. Lascaris was the correspondent of the *Patriz*: this gentleman had taken up his headquarters at Philippias, but he always used to date his correspondence from the outpost line, which he never visited. In lurid terms, and much spilling of journalistic blood, he used to tell of sanguinary battles, adding little imaginary details of his own personal exploits. The reading of these romances used to arouse the rivalry of Lascaris, who was at least at the front. I remember well one typical incident. A copy of the *Patriz* had arrived, and in it our confrère stated that he had that day made an intrepid reconnaissance up to kilometre 17—*i.e.* one kilometre in advance of the extreme Greek outpost line, and right under the nose of Bizani. My friend Lascaris was not to be outdone. We were, as a matter of fact,

eating bread and olives on a mountain-side right opposite to Bizani, and every now and again a stray Turkish shell spattered gravel and rock-chips in our faces. But he wrote to his paper that he was lunching with an "intrepid Englishman" at kilometre 15, right amongst the Turkish guns, and that "with the sangfroid common to the Britisher, I cursed the shells as they spattered each mouthful with mud and gravel." I do not know, but I expect the *Patrizz* correspondent next day dated his message from Bizani itself! but I did not have the curiosity to inquire.

The Greek engineers had by now cut a pathway up the mountain-side to a plateau on which it was intended to mount several batteries of field artillery. The guns were pulled to pieces, and their component parts, placed on gigantic stretchers, were carried up in sections by perspiring gunners and re-assembled at the top. The ammunition was carried up by hand, each man carrying a couple of projectiles at a time over the 1,500 yards of steep ascent.

Lascaris and myself, with our pockets full of figs and bread (when we could get it), used to start forth of a morning and climb to some point of vantage where we could get a comprehensive view of such operations as were going on, returning at dusk to our disorderly home. Those were days when we saw much and ate little—which, from the journalistic point of view at least, is better than eating much and seeing little (unless of course one happens to be a gourmand and a liar)!

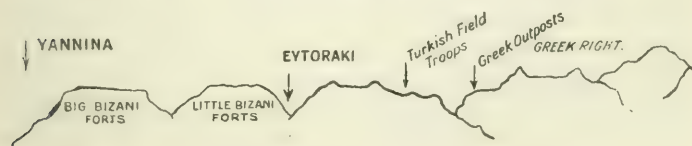
In weeks to come I came to know that gorge of Kaneta over-well, and all the Greek positions for miles to either flank; by dint of constant study through field-glasses, I became acquainted with every rock and gully on Bizani Mountain which lay in front of us; but I find in my diary of December 14th my first impressions of that great fortress which we had been so anxious to get a glimpse of for the past two months, and which we were doomed to look upon for another three. I transcribe these impressions.

The road from the summit of the pass at Kaneta, where the mountains rise about 900 ft. above the road-level on either side, runs due north down a gorge which

is at no point more than 200 yards wide, until, after falling 400 ft. in 1,200 yards, it finds the level of the plain. Here the road skirting the range of hills that forms the Greek centre turns sharp to the left, leaving Khani Phwat Bey on the right, concealed behind a solitary hill. It is at Khani Phwat Bey that the old and new road join.

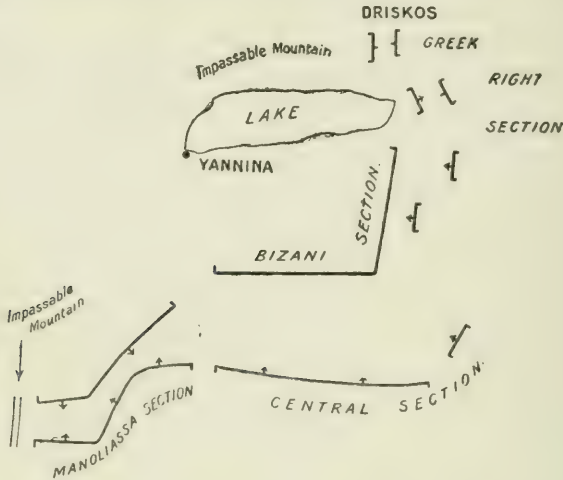
Looking along the road from this point, one is facing almost due west. On the left are the Greek hills; on the right the great rocky hills which culminate to the west in Little and Great Bizani stretch for some three miles, forming the northern boundary of this narrow funnel-shaped plain, which at the Kaneta end is about 1,600 yards across, and where it merges into the greater plain of Yannina is about 2,800 yards in width. In the very centre of this small plain rises a perfect sugarloaf hill, about 800 ft. high. The road, first skirting the Greek hills, runs round the base of the sugarloaf over to the Turkish side, and there skirts Bizani until, twisting due north again, it is lost to view behind the mass of Great Bizani. That way lies Yannina, the minarets and beautiful lake of which we can see quite clearly from some of the Greek positions.

Looked at in profile, the Bizani range is not very impressive—it looks solid rather than aggressive. On the right, as I look north, it appears to detach itself from the tangle of mountains. It is a barren, rocky, round-shouldered mass, with occasional crags pointing to the sky. As I turn and look straight ahead, the crags disappear, the range dips a couple of hundred feet into a gully, only to rise again into another round-shouldered hill a mile or so long, then comes another gully. That is where the Greek outposts of our right were fighting all day long. On the other (western) side of the gully is an exactly similar hill, which is called Little Bizani, then another gully, and finally Big Bizani finishes the range.



Looked at from the Greek centre, the profile runs as above. Bizani itself is about 750 ft. above the plain, and 2,400 ft. above sea-level.

The Greek front formed, therefore, a somewhat complicated alignment, which can best be shown in a diagram thus :



That first night under canvas at Kaneta I could not sleep for some reason—perhaps it was the brightness of the winter moon. At last I could stand the snores of my sleeping companions no longer; cautiously I crept out of the tent and walked along the road, then fearing to be challenged by some soldier from those whose *tentes d'abris* were pitched casually along the roadside, I turned up the hill and climbed an empty stream-bed with no very fixed idea. Twenty minutes' climb led me to a small plain on the lap of the mountain. Here I circled round the camp of a company of infantry, and in a quarter of an hour found myself looking on to Bizani. A Greek picket, some little way up the hill on my left, told me that I was near the Greek outposts. I conceived the idea of trying to pass through unobserved and test their wakefulness. To avoid the observation of the sentry over the picket was easy enough, for he was walking a beat, and when his back was turned I went forward, when he faced in my direction I lay low.

Three hundred yards ahead the ground fell away at a slope of about 1 in 2 to the plain some 500 ft. below, out of which, right opposite to where I now was, the sugarloaf hill raised itself majestically, bathed in the moonlight. To avoid the vigilance of a double sentry post about 100 yards away on my right seemed a more difficult task than I actually found it to be, and after a rather thrilling ten minutes I found myself down on the plain at the base of the hills. I was between the two opposing outpost lines.

Some clouds had come up and obscured the moon, and the ease with which I had penetrated the Greek lines gave me an appetite for more adventure. I would see if the Turkish sentries were more wide awake. Taking advantage of the bushes and of dry rivulet courses, I worked my way across a thousand yards of plain until I was lying my full length in some knee-high grass by the roadside just where the road skirting the sugarloaf hill passed between this and a small hillock on my left. I had no doubt as to where the Turkish sentry line ran, for I had seen the flash of a fixed bayonet on my way. The sentry was standing half-way up the hillock looking over where I lay some twenty yards away, gazing straight up the road toward Kaneta. I could just see his head and chest and his mauser bayonet. For the first time it occurred to me that a mauser bayonet was a very ugly weapon to run against. For ten minutes he stood staring motionless, and apparently listening hard. He must have heard me. I awaited breathlessly his next movement. Suddenly, as if with a fixed resolution, he turned on his heel and walked rapidly down the hillock and out of my sight. He called on one Onbashi Hassan as he went, and I knew that he was off to find the corporal, presumably of the visiting rounds or of a detached post.

I felt the moment was come for me to make some sort of move. To get up and run for it was too risky—I could always do that, or fight it out as a last resource. I would try deception first. In my walk I had picked up one of those little bells worn by the goats. I took this out of my pocket, attached it to a bit of string which I invariably carried, and fixing the bell

upon a branch of a low scrubby bush, I made off with the other end of the piece of string as rapidly and noiselessly as I could. My string was, I knew, fifty yards long—I used it to measure things with by means of many knots along its length; but long before I had got to the end of my string I heard the footsteps of men returning. I wriggled down behind a friendly bush, and with string in hand I waited. Three men now stood upon the hillock, looking hard at the place where I had been lying (I, of course, had gone off at an angle, so as not to be in prolongation of their line of vision). Evidently, Mr. Corporal Hassan, my friend the sentry and their companion were having a difference of opinion. I saw the sentry point at my previous hiding-place, about three yards from the bush where my bell was now hanging. There was a low-voiced discussion, then slowly one of the figures came down the hillock, with rifle at the "Port," straight towards the spot. I agitated the string—the bell tinkled. The two men on the hillock laughed, the other ran quickly forward—doubtless in search of goat's meat. I tinkled violently, and then with a jerk pulled the bell off its branch and rapidly, hand over hand, towards me—still tinkling loudly.

It was an exciting moment: would the man give chase?—if so I must drop the string and trust to luck or pluck—would he perhaps become suspicious that the bell was not around a goat's neck? Luckily the moon was well obscured and the grasses fairly thick and high. Quicker and quicker I pulled—louder and louder chortled the men on the hillock; at last, at about fifteen paces from where I lay, the pursuer stopped short. I dropped the string, and prepared myself for any emergency. Five seconds of breathless suspense, and then, with a guttural chuckle, he turned on his heel and marched back to his comrades with his rifle at the slope. For the sake of appearances and sound I pulled in the remainder of the string, pocketed my bell and thanked Allah. A minute later all three men disappeared over the hillock, and I profited by their absence to get as far away as I could. To cross the road here was obviously impossible.

I will not weary my readers with details of my further adventures that night. Suffice it to say that, after trying

to screw up my courage to enter the little stone hut at the bottom of the sugarloaf hill, and failing to get it to sticking-point, I made a wide detour and then up towards Little Bizani again, along the bed of a watercourse in which 6 in. of water struck chill to my feet. How I dodged a Turkish sentry and passed unseen by the picket, lay for ten minutes between two Turkish batteries, and heard the men chatting to one another unconscious of my presence, or how eventually by another route I made my way back and passed through the Greek lines in front of Kaneta, are matters of satisfaction to me, but of no possible interest to the reader. I got back to my tent by 6 a.m., and when my comrades awoke me an hour later for breakfast, they were unconscious of my night's adventures, nor did I enlighten them. As a matter of fact I was rather ashamed of myself. What right had I, a non-combatant, an alien, and a married man, to go fooling about amongst outpost lines?

I kept the expedition to myself for a fortnight or so, and then one evening I let it out by mistake in the heat of a discussion. Some Greek officers were discussing the positions of the Turkish outposts and batteries. I contradicted them. They vowed they had seen them here—and here—with their glasses, and I told them that I knew to the contrary, because I had been there! Then it came out, and after my wife had given me a public scolding, I was asked why on earth I had not mentioned all this before—that the information was distinctly valuable. I must tell the General and make a little sketch-map. I explained that I had feared the scolding, and as to the value of the information gathered I presumed that for the past fortnight the whole Turkish position had been thoroughly explored and sketched by Greek scouts. Then the truth leaked out: *There is no such thing as a scout in the whole Greek army!* I was appalled and chastened in spirit. Some of the Greek papers got hold of the adventure, and I found myself looked upon as either a champion scout or a champion liar, according to the sentiments of the reader: as a matter of fact I am, unfortunately, neither, being only a very moderate performer in both these branches of art!

CHAPTER XIII

THE ACTIONS OF MANOLIASSA AND EYTORAKI (DECEMBER 14TH, 15TH, 16TH, 17TH). WITH MENTION OF THE ACTION AT DRISKOS (DECEMBER 9TH)

PESTA was fought on December 12th; on the 13th the Greek right pushed forward, and on the 14th the Greek left moved up to the southern entrance of Manoliassa Gorge. The general directions can be seen on the skeleton map, which makes no attempt at exactitude.

Before, however, I attempt to describe the results of this forward movement, I must ask my readers to hark back five days, to December 9th, on which day the Garibaldian Legion made their attack upon Driskos.

The idea had been conceived that a forward movement on the extreme Greek right from the direction of Metsovo on Driskos, threatening Yannina from the north-east, could not fail to facilitate the advance of the Greek main army on the Pesta-Sefik Bey line. On this side the Greeks had the Garibaldian Legion, two newly-formed battalions of infantry and a battery. The intention, so far as I have been able to ascertain, was to move forward with this force on December 10th, and threaten the Turkish left, which would be compelled either to detach a flank guard or to fall back. The Greek strategy, however, did not reckon with the forced march of Lieut.-Colonel Faik Bey from the Monastir Army with the 19th Division. This Division (less two battalions and a field battery, sent to face the threatened Greek landing at Santi Quaranta) arrived at Yannina on the evening of the 9th.

Meanwhile the Garibaldians, sent to act as advance-guard to the Greek detachment, outstripped their orders and determined upon a lone-hand adventure. On the

9th they ran up against the Turkish Yannina garrison which had been sent out to meet them, consisting of the 23rd Chasseurs, and the Malakas (Redif) Battalion, supported by a battery ($\frac{4}{\frac{2}{3}}$) at Driskos. The uniforms of the Garibaldians, consisting of a bright scarlet shirt and khaki breeches, rendered them peculiarly conspicuous, and despite the great bravery they displayed, they were unable to make any headway. Faik Bey was immediately sent to reinforce the Turkish detachment, and on December 10th it was only the timely arrival of the Greek infantry which saved the Garibaldians from complete annihilation. As it was, the Garibaldians practically ceased to exist as a unit.

Ill-advised, however, as their independent forward movement was, it had one result of which they themselves were supremely unconscious. The plan of the Turkish generalissimo, Essad Pasha, had been to make a forward movement towards Philippias, and whilst Phwat Bey with his two divisions held the Greeks in check along the line Pesta-Iphthalia, Faik Bey's new division, 5,000 strong, was to sweep down through Manoliassa on to Emin Aga and turn the Greek left. This premature move of the Garibaldians caused Essad to alter his plans. Faik was sent to the Turkish left instead of to the right, and by the time he had dealt with the Greek detachment there he was too far away to come to the support of Phwat Bey on the evening of December 12th, after the battle of Pesta. Thus the initiative was left still to the Greeks; the Garibaldians, in committing a tactical fault, helped the Greek army to reap a strategical benefit. Had it not been for their foolhardiness in attacking single-handed, Faik would have probably joined Phwat at the Battle of Pesta, in which case I have not the least doubt that the Greek 2nd Division would have been crumpled up and the whole situation altered in favour of the Turks. As things fell out, however, Faik found himself, on December 14th, to the north-east of Bizani instead of to the south-west of it.

At Manoliassa itself was the Redif Battalion of Avlona which expected to be reinforced next day by the 6,000 men of Djavid Pasha's 20th and 21st Divisions, also arriving from Monastir. From this point I follow the

story of the battle of Manoliassa as told to me by Constantine Manos, since I myself was not present the whole time.

The Greek Headquarters staff were under the erroneous impression that Manoliassa was not occupied. They intended to send the 2nd Division there on the morning of December 15th; in the meanwhile orders were issued to Constantine Manos to march with his 200 Cretan irregulars and occupy the gorge. He was to be supported by a battalion of the 15th Regiment, and, at 5 p.m. on the night of the 14th he was told to expect the whole of the baggage column of the 2nd Division. Having arranged with the O.C. of the battalion of the 15th to follow and support him, he set forth. Much to his surprise and delight (for poor Manos ever loved a battle), he found Manoliassa occupied; also, to his dismay, he found himself unsupported; there were no signs anywhere of the Battalion. However this light-hearted chief of irregulars determined to have a crack at the Turks "on his own": his Cretans deployed into skirmishing line, and so well did they do their work that after an hour's engagement the Turks fled, and Manos, with his 200 men, captured the village and camp, where he counted 47 Turkish dead. This was at 4 p.m.

Manoliassa village lies below the crest, and Manos pushed his men forward the remaining 800 yards to the summit, and there awaited the Turkish counter-attack, for he heard from a villager that a whole Turkish regiment had been in occupation of the place (this was untrue, as it was only held by the Avlona Battalion), and he anticipated that they would try to retake the position.

At 6 p.m., with the night, the baggage column of the 2nd Division duly arrived, but it was not until 7 p.m. that the company of Captain Barcas of the 15th Battalion put in an appearance, the rest of the battalion arriving at 8 p.m.: they had dawdled by the road, and more or less lost their way in the darkness.

Manos explained the position to the O.C. the Battalion, and begged him to relieve his men on the crest line, as they were weary and hungry, having had nothing to eat all day, and having marched and fought on empty stomachs. Manos was sharply told to mind his own

business: that the battalion commander would place his outposts where he pleased—just outside the village, in fact—and that he (Manos) could go to the devil. Manos preferred to go to dinner, but being doubtful as to the security of dining in the village with the summit left at the mercy of the Turks, he withdrew all his men to a safer spot about 1,000 yards away, and there fed them and went into bivouac. The Battalion billeted itself in the Turkish tents and village.

At dawn next morning, when the mists still hung like a fog on the mountain-side, two battalions of Djavid Pasha's Army arrived, and gaining the summit swooped down upon the village (December 15th). The Greek Battalion, taken unawares, broke out of billets and fled disorganised down the mountain-side, whilst an urgent message was sent to Manos for help. He responded, and for two hours the grey fight wavered to and fro in the morning mists. Then suddenly a dark column was seen moving up on the Greek flank: through the haze was seen the flash of bayonets—the men of the 15th poured a galling hail of musketry on this new foe—when suddenly, loud above the noise of battle, came the voice of a young officer calling loudly in Greek, "For God's sake do not fire—we are the 2nd Division." His men were kneeling or lying under the withering fire, but he himself stood up clearly silhouetted against the background of rising vapours. Perhaps they did not hear, perhaps their nerves were all ajar, perhaps they feared a trap—it will never be known!—but the men of Captain Barcas' company greeted the voice with a deadly volley, and young Kalaris—the son of the General commanding the Division—fell back riddled with bullets.¹

Gradually, as battalion after battalion of the 2nd Division came up and threw itself into the fight, the two Turkish battalions were driven back: their supports coming up the hill were mistaken in the uncertain light for Greeks by a Turkish battery, and for a quarter of an hour were fired upon with shrapnel until they broke

¹ Since writing the above version General Kalaris himself has informed me that this account of his son's death is incorrect. Young Kalaris did not fall until two hours later, when he was killed leading his men in a bayonet charge. I like to think that so fine a young officer met his death in such worthy fashion.—A. H. T.

in disorder and fled. Other supports came on, and so all day long the battle raged fiercely. Sometimes the Turks took the village, sometimes the Greeks—it was a soldiers' battle without any preconceived plan or tactical idea. A Greek field battery back on the main road between Iphthalia and Kaneta fired upon the Turkish slopes, whilst three batteries from Bizani poured shell and shrapnel upon the Greeks—the opposing batteries could not fire upon each other. Gradually machine guns were brought up on either side. The narrow gorge quickly became a shambles. The forces were about even, some 7,000 rifles on either side, the Turks having the advantage as regards artillery and machine guns. All that day the battle continued, and the next, until at last, in the early afternoon of the 17th, the Turks in one supreme effort captured the village and held it, whilst the Greeks, sullen, withdrew out of gun-range of Bizani, but still within rifle-range of Manoliassa.

The carnage had been tremendous. It is impossible to obtain accurate or even approximate figures, but I very much doubt if the Greeks, who had 7,000 rifles on the morning of the 15th, could have mustered more than half that number on the evening of the 17th—that is to say, close upon 50 per cent. of losses. The Turks, too, suffered terribly. Their commander, Djavid Pasha, was killed in the final Turkish attack, and there was no one to take his place and to press on, else perhaps the Greeks might have been driven still farther back. As it was, however, the men on both sides had had their belly-full of fight. Worn out, they devoted the evening and night to burying their dead. It was a long task.

Meanwhile on the Greek right, over towards Eytoraki, on December 14th and 15th there had been some serious fighting. Here, it will be remembered, the Greek Evzone Brigade, after the battle of Pesta, pushing on in the track of Phwat Bey's retirement, believed Bizani to be within their grasp. They did not know that Faik Bey, with his 19th Division, fresh from defeating the Greek detachment at Driskos, had got into touch with Bizani on the evening of December 13th. In a long ravine, under shelter of a hill, the four battalions of Evzones deployed into line on the morning of the 14th, only

crowning the hill with a small detachment. Faik Bey had received orders to push forward. His Division was without artillery, and was terribly depleted in numbers, but since Bizani formed the right pivot of his scheme of manœuvre, he could count upon that fortress for all the artillery support he was likely to require. He had reorganised his Division into six battalions, and Phwat Bey lent him one from Bizani, while the General placed the Yannina garrison (the two battalions already referred to) at his disposal. Thus he had nine battalions. These he formed into three columns, one on either flank and one in reserve, each column advancing with two battalions in the firing line and one in support.

The Turks had by now accustomed themselves to find the Greeks always perched upon the summit of the mountains; wherefore, when on the morning of the 14th Faik's right column saw a small detachment upon the mountain top suddenly turn tail and fly, the two battalions rushed up the hillside without deploying into line. They were in one line of double companies in column of fours, and in that formation they reached the crest. The four Evzone Battalions were in line waiting for them, and a terrific fight ensued. The Turks, unable to deploy into line, were driven back in disorder, carrying with them their supporting battalion, which had come up too close. In vain Bizani chimed in with her many guns and maxims to check the advance; the Greeks, victorious, saw visions of permanent victory before them—Bizani itself seemed within their grasp.

They thought they were only dealing with a sortie from the fortress, they did not know that they had merely driven in the right of a new Turkish Division—a Division composed of the best Turkish regular troops. But they were soon to be undeceived. The Turkish reserve column checked their wild onslaught, and as night fell, in front of this new and unexpected adversary the Evzones fell back out of range of Bizani, to reconsider the situation and to gain a little well-merited rest. They had fought successfully against superior odds under the very guns of an immensely strong fortress on their flank. But on the 15th the whole situation was gradually forced upon them. Faik's left column suddenly made its

presence felt. All day long, fighting stubbornly against tremendous odds, these gallant Evzones gradually drew back, until the longed-for goal of Bizani faded into the distance, and they were hard put to it to prevent their own flanks from being turned. Night-fall on the 15th saw the Greek right flank back at Valchora again, whilst on the 16th and 17th their left flank was being gradually driven back at Manoliassa. Is it to be wondered at that the night of December 17th was a sad one for the Greek Army of Epirus?

In eight days, from Driskos on the 9th, the Army had lost close upon 7,000 casualties out of an effective strength of 20,000 regulars (and perhaps 7,000 irregulars who had not been engaged and who could not be counted upon).

CHAPTER XIV

THE POLICY OF AVRIO

THE night of December 17th was a bitter one for the Greek army of Epirus. Beaten back on either flank, they had practically no troops in the centre—that is to say no infantry. At immense pains they had succeeded in getting up one battery of field artillery on to the plateau about 600 ft. above Kaneta; the guns and carriages and limbers had been dismounted, and each portion carried up on the shoulders of the men and put together again at the top. Down in the hollow below Kaneta, the four big guns (4·7-in.) had been busy ever since they had been brought up from Sefik Bey; there were four other field batteries at Kaneta awaiting positions to be found for them, when the order came for the whole of the artillery to be withdrawn. There were only two battalions of infantry in the Greek centre, and the General judged that his artillery was not safe if the Turks should find sufficient reserve of energy left to make an attack upon the centre.

Whether the General was well advised or not it is difficult to say; but I cannot help thinking that it would have been better to have taken the risk of leaving the heavy battery and the field battery, which were already in position at all events. If the Turks did attack, these would have been invaluable to assist the infantry in a desperate defence, and even had these two batteries been lost it would not have been an irremediable blow. The Greeks had more guns than they could find positions for. On the other hand, the withdrawal of the guns, coupled with the tales told by the long streams of wounded coming in from both flanks, had a deplorable effect upon the morale of the Greek centre. The two miserable battalions here felt themselves abandoned to their fate,

and if the Turks had attacked that night or the next morning, I doubt if they would have put up much of a fight before falling back.

I myself returned to Kaneta after watching the retirement of the Greeks from Manoliassa, to find my tent companions in a state of despondency. Our poet and the deputies maintained that "tout était perdu sauf l'honneur," and they decided the next day to make back to the base, and thence to Athens. Lascaris was equally despondent, but for another reason: the chauffeur who was to have brought us out our stores had failed to bring food—there was no hope of anything to eat that night, except one slab of chocolate and a quarter of a loaf of bread, and we were both ravenously hungry. To add to our woes, one of the enemy's shells had ventilated our tent during our absence, and it promised to be a bitterly cold night. When I was offered a seat in a motor to go down to Philippias, with prospects of food and a bed, the offer was too good to miss, and I left Lascaris in undisputed possession of the bread and chocolate. Thus it was that when the order came, an hour later, for the withdrawal of the artillery I was not there to chronicle the effect of the news. But next morning early, with Colonel Yoanno (the chief of staff), I started in a motor for Kaneta, well stocked with provisions, and it was then that I saw unmistakable signs of the overnight panic.

Now the Greek Army does things differently along the lines of communication than any other that I have come across: details for the front, wounded for the rear, and all the *va et vient* of an army in the field, move independently. Nobody is in charge of anybody. Half a dozen men leaving the base to rejoin their battalion do not form up in a squad under the charge of the oldest soldier or a non-commissioned officer; instead, each man is given a paper showing the day of starting, and told to go and find his battalion as best he can. He therefore starts more or less when he likes, stops when and where he likes, and feeds as best he can. The result is that all along the lines of communication is a constant stream of officers, non-coms. and privates making their way to the front, sometimes walking in groups, some-

times attaching themselves to a supply column, but usually wandering along in solitude.

The wounded who are well enough to walk, or who cannot find room in a cart, make a stream in the opposite direction. But on the morning of December 18th both these streams were flowing basewards, and everybody was walking a great deal quicker than usual. Ten miles north of Philippias (at Khani Redin Pasha) I was flabbergasted to recognise the face of Lascaris—a very chastened and careworn Lascaris—emerging from a mass of blankets, coats, baskets, and other truck. He flung everything on the ground, and called upon me incoherently.

“Oh, what a night I have had you do not know,” he exclaimed, with uplifted hands, when he at length was calm enough to speak. I admitted that his appearance certainly did indicate a night of unseemly dissipation. At last he told his tale when I had comforted him with some cognac and chocolate :

The guns received the order to retire at 5.30 p.m., and at 5.31 p.m. the deputies and the poet were making a three-cornered race of it to Philippias. It took Lascaris the best part of half an hour to collect his own belongings and mine—it was noble of him under the circumstances to think of my kit—and then he and two cyclists started off loaded up to the eyes. The tent was left behind. All through the night they tramped, and as they went they found everybody flocking in the same direction—everybody, that is to say, who could—all the flotsam and jetsam on the lines of communication. There were made, that night, some very creditable attempts on the Marathon record !

Luckily the Turks did not meditate any attack, and a few days later saw the guns brought back to Kaneta, supported by considerable reinforcements. Then followed a period which I have called the “Avrio” period. *Avrio* in modern Greek means “to-morrow,” and at that time it was the word most common on our lips. Everybody one met had it on official information that the final assault was ever to take place “Avrio.” Sapountzakis himself encouraged these rumours—or at least he did not deny them. Every time the big guns had a little practice, we all cried “Ah ! at last ! That is the com-

mencement! to-morrow we shall be at Yannina!" But it was a long and weary succession of to-morrows. Every now and again the Greek artillery would indulge in a few hours' practice, to which the Turks would reply sparingly, economising their ammunition. I recollect on one occasion a procedure which struck me as peculiarly infantile. The General sent an order that on such and such a day (six days later) all the guns should commence a bombardment of Bizani at 3 a.m. Naturally we all anticipated that this was to be the BIG DAY. But again our hopes were doomed to disappointment. At 3 a.m. all the batteries then grouped about Kaneta (13 in all, *i.e.* 52 cannon) opened fire. It was a misty night, and the effect of the shells could only be approximately estimated. Gradually the fire dwindled and abated, until by 6 a.m. it had practically ceased. I asked a staff officer the reason of this peculiar demonstration, for I could not see any utility in telling the Turks how many batteries we had managed to place in position—it seemed an empty boast.

"We fired on the Bizani," he said, "to show the Turks that if they fire upon our infantry at Manoliassa we are now in a position to make it hot for their batteries"—a childish argument! The General would have been better advised to dissimulate his strength until the time when he was prepared to strike home. As it was, the demonstration only resulted in a great waste of ammunition and in apprising the Turks of the arrival of large reinforcements.

The army of Epirus did, in fact, receive very great reinforcements about this period. The 4th and 6th Divisions were embarked at Salonika and sent round by sea, thus making up the strength of the Army to somewhere between 40,000 and 50,000 men. Colonel Yoanno was given command of the fine brigade of Evzones, whilst General Kalari became chief of staff in his stead.

But the morale of the Army was sensibly deteriorating: officers and men alike were beginning to lose confidence in their general. They asked nothing better than to be led against Bizani; they were buoyed up with incessant hopes of Avrio, but each succeeding day only served to embitter their disappointment when nothing was done.

Besides, everybody was living a hand-to-mouth existence. It was not thought worth while to lay in any stores of food, since it was always confidently predicted that on the morrow we should be at Yannina. Indeed, many officers' messes were in a deplorable condition of discomfort and famine. For weeks on end I have known officers to live on nothing save bread and occasional lumps of cheese, or some chocolate. A sardine was a luxury; sugar, tea, coffee, were unknown joys.

I myself remember a nefarious deal that I carried out, and my only excuse is that an empty stomach is the worst enemy of conscience. The only commodity remaining to the officers of the heavy battery was a $\frac{1}{4}$ -lb. tin of Van Houten's cocoa and some coffee. I myself had run short of tea, coffee and cocoa, but I had some sugar. Now Van Houten's cocoa without sugar is about as unpleasant as Epsom Salts, so I traded off some of my sugar against that tin of cocoa, and by way of a make-weight I threw in a packet of chocolate. I am not quite as ashamed of this transaction as I might otherwise be, since these selfsame officers had played a trick on me which, until they see this page, they doubtless fondly imagine I never discovered. When Lascaris left Kaneta hurriedly on the night of December 17th with our belongings, he left our tent behind him. When I met him later and we went back to look for it we found it not. We inquired of our friends of the heavy battery whether they had taken it with them when they retired, but they said that they had had as much as they could do to carry their own gear. For a week or so we looked near and far for that tent, but did not find it; at last I went a-scouting around the lines of the heavy battery, and there I discovered it with two of our friends comfortably installed inside. There was no mistaking the tent, for during one of the bombardments to which Kaneta was submitted, between December 12th and December 17th, a shell had come hurtling through the canvas, and had left a big hole which it was easy to recognise. Rather than make a fuss, however, we left them in possession, and contented ourselves with a *tente d'abris* composed of eight sections, which really proved more comfortable. However I

fancy I paid off the feud in the matter of the cocoa transaction above described.

About this time the Greek staff began seriously to consider the improvement of the lines of communication, and it was high time! Considering the haphazard manner in which supplies found their way up to the front, and the innumerable days when the troops were not fed at all, it was a constant marvel to me that the men did not complain more bitterly of their neglected state. The Army horses, as well as the baggage-animals, had already begun to sicken and die from lack of fodder. The men wore on their faces that pinched appearance which comes when the food distributed is barely sufficient to keep body and soul together.

Clothing and blankets were never served out by the military authorities, and had it not been for the self-imposed labours of Mr. Parmenides, the tally of consumptive cases and frost-bites would have been infinitely greater than it was. A large percentage of the men, it should be remembered, were wearing summer clothing; their underwear had long since worn to shreds, their boots in many cases had lost their soles, and the shoddy stuff of which the uniforms and blankets were made had grown threadbare and developed holes and rents. It was indeed a ragamuffin army that shivered on the mountain tops about Yannina. The men spent most of the day in grubbing up the roots of the oak scrub on the mountains to burn at eventide in order to get enough warmth in their bodies to make sleep possible. On those rare days when the rain ceased to deluge us, the troops would strip off their garments and attempt to dry them in the sickly rays of a watery sun, the while they pursued a relentless massacre of lice, from which we all suffered.

The only edible commodity which in those days was served out with any regularity was the bread—one loaf every two days; and as often as not this had been baked a week or ten days before it got into the hands of the troops.

Anything, therefore, which would improve the supply service was urgently required. Eventually a bakery depot was set up outside Philippias, and here daily suffi-

cient bread was baked to suffice for rather more than half the army. The bread was sent up to the front by motor lorry (each lorry carrying 500 loaves), and then distributed along the lines by mules and donkeys. In this way the evil of very stale and mildewed bread was partially abated.

But the best thing which was done to improve the lines of communication was the work undertaken by Lieutenant G. Voilas (Reserve Officer of Engineers). Mr. Voilas, who is in civil life in the Irrigation Department of the Egyptian Public Works, conceived the excellent idea of rendering the lower reaches of the Louros River navigable, and eventually, after much time wasted in considering this project, the proposal was agreed to, and Mr. Voilas placed in charge of the work. In three weeks, with only a limited supply of unskilled labour, this energetic and practical-minded young man had opened up some thirty-odd kilometres of the river to navigation, and set up a suitable landing-stage by the roadside some nine kilometres below Philippias. The Louros was thus practically turned into a canal, and vessels at Preveza discharged their heavy cargoes into barges which were towed up the river, thus economising the land journey, leaving only some 52 kilometres to be done by road to the advance lines instead of 83 as hitherto. Had it not been for Voilas it would have been impossible to have fed the Army of Epirus, which had now been reinforced to formidable proportions.

Towards the middle of January the Government and the Greek people appear to have grown as weary of General Sapountzakis' Fabian tactics as had the army under his command. The Crown Prince (now King Constantine) who was still at Salonika, was created Commander-in-Chief of all the Greek Army, and invited to take over the immediate direction of affairs in Epirus. Sapountzakis was recalled, and instructed to return to Athens *via* Arta, so that the unpleasantness of a meeting between him and the Prince might be avoided. The General, who had not been outside the house in which he lived and worked for a month, telegraphed that the road between Philippias and Arta was impassable for a motor-car, and requested permission to return *via* Preveza.

Meanwhile he dispatched another telegram to his royal master and one-time pupil, begging that he might be allowed to continue to serve through the campaign, even if only in a subordinate capacity.

The Royal Commander-in-Chief generously acceded to this request, and Sapountzakis was for the nonce relegated to the post of commander of his own original Division (the 8th). For a few days pending the arrival of the Prince all was muddle at Headquarters; one general after the other took supreme command for a few hours, until eventually, on January 18th, General Sapountzakis re-assumed the command (pending the arrival of the Prince) on the ground of being the senior officer in Epirus.

A comparatively small incident which happened on January 18th was, however, to have results of a widespread and almost disastrous character, and was responsible for the useless loss of thousands of lives. I have already told how badly the motor service between the base and the advance lines was organised and supervised. This lack of organisation was to prove indirectly responsible for the lives lost a few days later, on January 20th. And it fell out thus:

A large number of new motor-lorries had been brought into Epirus both from Macedonia and from Western Europe, with the result that a considerably enlarged staff of chauffeurs and mechanics was required. One of the new arrivals was loaded up with ammunition (96 shells) on the morning of January 18th, and told to deliver the load to the big guns by the roadside at Kaneta. Twice on the way up the chauffeur was asked his destination, and twice he gave different versions. He climbed the stiff gradient up to Kaneta, ran past the big guns, and on arriving at the summit of the pass slipped in his high gear and raced down the long incline. Men ran out and shouted at him; he replied that he was going to the outposts to collect wounded, but he never stopped. He raced past the outposts before they realised his intention, and sped across the plain to the Turkish lines, whilst the Greek outposts fired a few harmless rifle-shots at him.

The incident aroused a fury of indignation, and now that it was too late a complicated system of checking

motor traffic was put into force. Had the Greeks taken the very obvious precaution of placing a chain across the road and of mounting an examining post there, such an incident would have been impossible, but they were lax in such details, as must ever be the case where the staff officers are not accustomed to staff work. It was not, however, the loss of a lorry and of five-score shells that so much mattered, but the fact that the chauffeur passing through Kaneta could not have helped noting the positions of practically the whole of the Greek artillery, which at that time was concentrated in the defile. It was feared that the Turks, learning the exact positions of the Greek guns, would be able to pour in a devastating fire. General Sapountzakis took thirty-six hours to reconsider the situation, then finally, acting on the advice of some of his staff officers, issued the orders for a general assault upon the Yannina defences for January 20th.

It has been hinted that this was not the real reason for the General's action. It has been suggested that, finding himself in supreme command again until the Prince should arrive, he determined to make an effort to regain his lost reputation, and to risk all on one more battle before he was superseded. Such arguments may have influenced his decision to some extent, but I for one do not believe it, whereas I do know that officers of his staff urged him to attack the Turks on account of the escaped motor. I have, I fear, been somewhat scathing in this book about General Sapountzakis' ability; I take this opportunity with great pleasure of saying a good word for one who never failed to show me the utmost courtesy. I am myself convinced that the General did not allow personal considerations to enter into his calculations, and I think that the unbiassed reader will agree with me the more he studies the General's character. An old man, devoid of ambition, lacking in determination, he was not made of the stuff to gamble desperately on a last chance through personal motives. He believed he was doing the best for his country, for he had not sufficient military perspicacity to see the weakness of his own dispositions. He certainly believed that victory was within his grasp—and so it might have been if he had only known how to grasp it firmly!!

CHAPTER XV

THE GENERAL ACTION: JANUARY 7TH (O.S.)—20TH (N.S.)

FRIDAY—unlucky day!—January 20th dawned bright and clear. The approximate positions of the opposing troops are shown on the attached sketch-map,¹ which was very kindly roughed out for me by Phwat Bey himself, to whom I am also indebted for the details of the action as it appeared from the Turkish point of view.

At 8 a.m. the Greek batteries about Kaneta and Saint Nicholas opened a heavy fire upon the Turkish positions at Saint Elias, and two battalions of Turks of the Husni-Djavid mixed Division fell back under the cannonade, suffering somewhat heavy casualties from the excellence of the Greek artillery practice. Almost simultaneously the Greek artillery took under fire the batteries on Big Bizani, shown as A, D, B, on the sketch, at a range varying from 5,000 to 6,500 metres. At 8.30 a.m., however, the whole of the Greek artillery switched on to subdue the fire of the Turkish batteries, whilst at the same time the Greek 4th Division commenced a flanking movement to the westward in the direction of Manoliassa.

Gradually, as the Greeks developed battalion after battalion of infantry, and began to slowly push the Turkish infantry off the heights of Saint Elias, the Turkish commander found himself obliged to consider his situation seriously. He knew that the Greeks had been heavily reinforced (for the Turkish secret agents were almost as active as the Greek), but he did not know their exact strength; he knew, also, that there was some talk of the Crown Prince taking supreme command, but he did not know whether he had already arrived or not. For some hours he remained in suspense as to the real

¹ In pocket at back of book.

meaning of the Greek initiative, but about noon, seeing that the Greek left did not push its advantage, he came to the conclusion that either the Greek plans had miscarried or else that the attack of their 4th Division was but a mere feint to cover their main objective—probably against Eytoraki. At 12.30 p.m., therefore, he ordered Faik Bey to make a counter-attack against the Greek right, and Faik with his nine battalions of Nizam commenced a forward movement. Three Greek batteries, who had been awaiting their opportunity, suddenly opened fire upon the Turkish advance, taking them in enfilade fire by their right flank, and bringing their attack to an absolute standstill by the accuracy of their fire; meanwhile these same batteries smothered "M" with a galling fire. Phwat Bey, who was commanding the troops on Little Bisani, finding himself powerless to assist M, owing to the contour of the ground, ordered these two guns to use all their remaining ammunition upon the Greek infantry.

For an hour the fight hung in the balance, whilst gun spoke to gun and rifle spat at rifle; but at 1.30 p.m. the Greek right developed a counter-attack with four battalions of infantry upon Eytoraki, and the Turks commenced to extricate themselves from a difficult position. During this retreat one Turkish battalion, whilst attempting to change direction, was caught between two fires and almost decimated, but sacrificed itself in a most gallant manner in the hope of giving its comrades time to take up a second position in rear.

Things on the Turkish left were now becoming critical. The two battalions held in general reserve (the 23rd Chasseurs and the Yannina Redif Battalion) were ordered forward to the *point d'appui*. But the Greek infantry were not to be denied. Although B and E took them under fire, and for a moment caught some of the Greek infantry descending a ravine, their advance was not to be gainsaid. They swung round their right through Kortortsi, and attempted to cut the line of the Turkish retreat, whilst the whole of the Greek artillery took the Turkish gunners under fire. As the light began to fail, the Turks were in full retreat, and the Greek Evzones were coming along splendidly with the 6th Division in

support until at 7 p.m. they had reached to within 600 yards of the *point d'appui*!

The two Turkish guns at M had meanwhile, having used up all their ammunition, made a splendid retreat. They waited until all their own infantry had fled streaming past them; then, when the Greeks were within 300 yards, they limbered up their guns with their remaining horses and galloped out of action over as precipitous a hillside as man can well imagine.

Meanwhile the two battalions from the Turkish general reserve ordered at noon to support Faik Bey at the *point d'appui*, had by five o'clock only reached the vicinity of Serviana. It was then too late. Faik's Division had ceased to exist as a fighting unit, it was in full retreat, and only as a matter of fact rallied at Kotchelios after night had fallen. Out of his nine weak battalions Faik had lost 1,600 casualties; he had fought all day long with hardly any artillery support. He had been ordered to make a counter-attack early in the day against an enemy in superior force under an enfilade artillery fire, and he had been beaten back. Later his reinforcements failed him. If his battalions got out of hand towards sunset, it is not to be wondered at; they had fought well throughout the day, but they were out-fought by the Greeks, whose élan was irresistible.

Whilst these events were in progress on the Greek right, across on the opposite flank, towards Manoliassa, the Greek offensive had absolutely stopped at midday, whilst in the centre the Greeks made no effort. It is a most disheartening battle to describe, for one cannot but help admiring both combatants and despising the generalship that rendered all this loss of life so abortive.

Here, early in the morning, the Greeks are successful on the west, and drive back two Turkish battalions; in the centre they do nothing; on the right they achieve remarkable success, put a whole Turkish Division to flight, reach to within 600 yards of abandoned Turkish guns, with only two battalions between themselves and Yannina, and yet with the night comes the order to cease fire and to attempt no more. Enough lives have been lost!! Great God! the General should have thought of that before, or not at all. The end of a vic-

torious battle is not the moment for a general to consider the lives of his men—his only consideration then should be victory—overwhelming victory such as will avenge the dead and bring compensation to the living. There is, I fear, no excuse for Sapountzakis. He had victory within his grasp. I know that not only were the Turks ready to give it to him had he made one last effort, but his own men were ready, burningly ready, to seize that opportunity. One word would have sent them forward over those last 600 yards, but the General spoke the word to hold them back. Never was order so reluctantly obeyed as that which told the Greek troops about Eytoraki to abandon their forward movement.

Meanwhile in the centre the Greek 2nd Division (who after their heavy losses in December at Manoliassa had been moved from the Greek left, where they were relieved by the 4th Division) had made some little progress. Moving forward from Kaneta and from the heights about Saint Nicholas, they pushed out towards the Sugarloaf Hill (τὸ Ἀυγά), and joined touch with the Greek right at the ravine which divided Little Bizani from the Greek positions near the village of Lijana (Lesaná). Here, opposite them, they had only one battalion of Turkish infantry (2nd Battalion of the 69th Regiment); the third battalion of the 69th Regiment having been sent to the *point d'appui* by Phwat Bey's orders when he saw that his general reserves were not coming up. Such was the Turkish position on the evening of January 20th that Vehib Bey, the commander of the whole Bizani section of the Turkish defences, at one moment issued the order to abandon Little Bizani altogether, but just as Phwat was about to execute this order the Greek pressure ceased. Phwat decided to stick to his positions. He tells me he spent a terrible night in his efforts to reorganise the Turkish defences on Little Bizani.

Of the four old Krupp field-guns at G, near the *point d'appui*, one had been ruined entirely, and two needed repair before they could again be rendered serviceable. Of the four 15-centimetre guns three were *hors de combat*, one permanently. Of the two quick-firing field-guns at E, one was permanently *hors de combat*, and he lacked ammunition for the other. The personnel of all the other

batteries had suffered severely: out of 300 garrison artillery-men he lost in this day 57 men killed and wounded and 3 officers wounded. With infinite labour during the night Phwat Bey brought up six reserve guns to replace casualties, and with the remnants of the four battalions under his command, $\frac{2 \text{ and } 3}{67}$ and $\frac{2 \text{ and } 3}{69}$, reinforced by the Redif battalion of Yannina and the 23rd Chasseurs, he made as brave a show as he could. His four mountain guns on the spurs to the east of Serviana had no ammunition, and these he withdrew. To add to the misery, that night it commenced to rain heavily. Even the heavens seemed to weep at the useless loss of life of that day's work.

For the next five days the two opposing armies contented themselves with an artillery duel. Meanwhile the Crown Prince had taken over command of the Greek Army.

CHAPTER XVI

ARRIVAL OF THE CROWN PRINCE (JANUARY 23RD) AND FALL OF YANNINA (MARCH 6TH)

IT was not because Prince Constantine was heir to the throne—for the Greek is a republican at heart, and has not that inborn feudalism in his soul which makes the Britisher thrill with loyalty and the pride of service—nor was it because he came as generalissimo to the Greek Army—for the Greek gives but grudging obedience to mere titles of rank—but because Prince Constantine was what he was, and had achieved what he had achieved, that he wrought the miracle of rejuvenating the Army of Epirus. Fresh from the victories in Thessaly, he came to us with his manly presence, his firm yet ever-smiling face; he came not as the Prince, not as the supreme Chief of the Army, but as a *man*. We had been waiting for a real man so long, and when at last he came we did not fail to realise his arrival.

His coming had been announced, and certain of the ladies who had done their best to turn Philippias into a winter resort, awaited his coming in much expectation of royal receptions and the like. The prospect of festive gatherings patronised by royalty was a pleasant one. The garrison of Philippias shaved itself and prepared to stand to attention for a few short minutes, present arms in approved style, and then sink back into its previous slovenly habits. Staff officers dressed themselves with some care, and for the first time in the memory of man the main street of Philippias was cleared of rubbish and offal. The Soldier Prince was due to arrive.

He came, unostentatiously clad in khaki! It was not the bows of the courtiers nor the curtsies of the women

that attracted his attention—it was the slovenliness of his own soldiery. He had not been five minutes in the place before he cursed the guard of honour. He brought with him a different atmosphere—men with two or three days' growth of beard on their chins slunk off to get shaven, once they had looked into the eyes of the man who was to take Yannina; officers paused in the middle of a half-spoken compliment and commenced to talk sense. There is something compelling in the whole attitude and bearing of Constantine of Greece. He makes one feel that one has to be sincere, or else efface oneself. He is not the sort of man to whom one could tell fairy stories with impunity.

Within two hours there were few essentials about the Army of Epirus with which he was not conversant, and then he got into his motor-car and drove up to the advance lines to form his own estimate of the morale of his troops; he had learnt by then not to rely overmuch upon the reports of the men on the spot. Then, together with the General Staff officers, whom he had brought with him from Salonika, he settled down to four dull weeks of steady work in reorganising the Army of Epirus.

None but a soldier could appreciate the immense strides taken during those weeks, for there was no display of reorganisation. Each item was taken in turn, detail by detail, remodelled, rejuvenated and fitted into the mechanism of war. Where Sapountzakis had merely had a mass of cumbrous machinery, ill-fitting, ill-finished, with much friction between each working part, the new Commander and his staff evolved a nicely-oiled and smoothly-working piece of mechanism. It was all done so quietly that few people realised that anything was being done at all—at least not in Philippias—it was away up at the front that the Army felt that at last a more capable steersman was at the helm, that their privations and endurance would not be in vain. Batteries, battalions and regiments were moved here and there, advance hospitals were set up, roads and paths were cut amongst the mountain fastnesses, innumerable telegraph and telephone wires sagged in the winter breezes. The outpost companies began to take an intelligent interest

in their work and to forget their misery, for they knew that any moment they might be visited by their Commander-in-Chief.

In short the Army of Epirus became an army of eager soldiers instead of a mere collection of long-suffering human beings. Such was the spirit Prince Constantine inspired in his troops that if he had been content to face the losses he could have led them to victory on any day he chose, even before his carefully thought-out plans had matured. But there had already been far too much unnecessary slaughter in Epirus. There was no need for indecent haste. Every day that passed must strengthen the besiegers and weaken the defence, wherefore the Greek Commander bided his own good time and worked incessantly to perfect the machinery which he proposed to set in motion with relentless force. Perhaps it was the result of his German military studies that made the Prince realise the value of the axiom, "When you strike, strike hard and with all your strength," or perhaps it was during his many years of sojourn in England that he had learnt the value of the blow "straight from the shoulder"—it matters not. For just four weeks after his arrival tranquillity reigned on the outpost line; not a life was sacrificed in vain, but everybody was set to work incessantly to prepare for the predestined climax. Every precaution that military thought could devise was taken, every *ruse de guerre* that the fertile brains of Colonel (now General) Douzmanis (Chief of Staff), Major (now Colonel) Mataxas, and Captain (now Lieut.-Colonel) Strategos could conceive was applied; and finally, when all was ready, the Royal Commander-in-Chief unleashed his Army, and within twenty-four hours had received the surrender of Yannina.

Everything had been so carefully thought out, so well prepared, that the taking of Yannina seemed almost like child's play. There was no long list of casualties to lament, no desperate encounters and hard-fought combats to describe; the Greek Army merely moved on Yannina in a succession of irresistible steps, and the garrison surrendered. Just as the expert chess-player pitted against the *novice* has no need to slaughter off innumerable pawns and pieces before he can cry "Mate!" so

Prince Constantine had no need for unnecessary blood-letting before he took Yannina in his grip.

I have attempted in the past pages to describe various battles, and I have tried also to give a little sketch of the character of Prince Constantine; but the *concise* dispatch in which he reported to the Government at Athens the manner of the taking of Yannina so appeals to my military instincts and to my mind as a writer, that I feel to describe the battle would be to descend to bathos. I prefer rather to place on record the soldierly narrative of the final fight as telegraphed to Athens by the Prince himself; readers will then be able to form their own opinion of the man who wrote that telegram, and to read between the lines.

*Official Report of King Constantine—then Crown Prince—
to the War Office on the Taking of Yannina*

“Taken all together, the defences of Yannina stretch for about thirty-three miles.

“The most important positions are those of Bizani, which dominates the road to Yannina.

“The Yannina defences mounted 102 cannons, 50 of which were on Bizani the day of the general attack, and 20 others at various points along the enemy’s front. Ever since the attack of January 20th our positions were very close to those of the enemy. At some places the two forces were not 300 yards apart. The enemy’s positions had been strengthened.

“From January 23rd, the day on which I took over command, until February 23rd, there was nothing but skirmishes and daily artillery duels the while we prepared for a decisive attack.

“From observations and reports I was convinced that success was doubtful if I attacked the eastern or southern defences. I therefore decided to attack vigorously and suddenly the western side, which, though as strong as the others, was less strongly held. Our troops, in breaking the line here, would find an open road to Yannina without being obliged to face Bizani, which positions they would then be able to attack in rear. In order to give effect to my intentions I decided:

“ 1. To make the enemy believe that I would attack from the east.

“ 2. To reinforce my own left.

“ 3. To establish at Emin Aga a large depot of provisions and ammunition, together with extensive hospital accommodation, and

“ 4. To prevent the more distant forts from co-operating in the defence.

“ I also gave the orders of which you are aware for the various threatening movements from the directions of Santi Quaranta, Korytsa and Fourka.

“ The enemy became convinced that I awaited the arrival of reinforcements from these places. Such reinforcements could not arrive in less than eight days, whereas in fact I commenced operations on the third day.

“ The movements of my army were rapidly executed, despite the bad weather and the difficulties of the terrain. Between March 2nd and 4th I concentrated twenty-three battalions of infantry and eight batteries of mountain artillery¹ on my extreme left, and I formed three columns under General Moschopoulo. Two of these columns were placed in the valley of Manoliassa, the third at Plessa.

“ On the morning of the 4th I ordered a mixed Division to advance and take Drisko and Condovraki (on the extreme right).

“ On the 5th I ordered a general attack. While the right wing kept the enemy in play, my left pushed home their attack.

“ By 7 a.m., one of my right columns had taken St. Nicholas, whilst another had occupied Dourouti, and the third column Manoliassa.

“ At 3 p.m. some of the enemy's troops were seen to be leaving Bizani and running towards Yannina, pursued by my troops. At that moment, therefore, the enemy's

¹ This concentration was performed secretly behind a screen of sentries: the troops themselves were not aware of what was afoot. The units were concentrated individually and not by brigades or regiments. The officer commanding one of the battalions told me that ten minutes before he got the orders for the general attack he thought that his battalion was alone, and he had not the faintest notion why he had been ordered to this particular spot.

front had been broken through between St. Nicholas and Sadovista, and we had taken twenty cannon.

“Towards nightfall the Evzones Brigade had their advance guard in position within 500 yards of Yannina. Bizani was isolated, and telephonic communication between that fortress and the town had been stopped. I had given the order to attack the fortress in rear on the morrow, and my artillery continued the bombardment throughout the night; but at 5 a.m. the next day (March 6th) Essad Pasha surrendered.

“Yannina has fallen.

“CONSTANTINE—*Crown Prince.*”

Could anything be more simple, more concise, than this report? But it is not the custom for great generals to write long dispatches about the victories they win; the people who waste ink are the bad generals who try to excuse the defeats they have endured. However, I cannot let pass the masterly strategy and tactics which finally gave Yannina into the hands of the Greeks, without adding a word or two of explanation and amplification.

It is interesting to note, for instance, how the royal commander-in-chief led his adversary to believe that he intended to attack from the east—and we know now from Turkish sources that it was from the east that the Turks feared the attack would come.

First of all the rumour was circulated widely that it was from the east that the attack would take place, and this news was duly retailed to the Turks by their spies. Secondly, some of the military attachés were advised to go to this theatre of operations if they wished to see the sport. Finally, a great show was made of moving troops eastwards for a few days preceding the battle, and the great mass of Greek artillery concentrated in the Greek centre detailed several batteries off towards the east.

In order to accomplish his second purpose, that of reinforcing his left, the Prince countermarched a large number of his infantry on the day and night preceding the battle, bringing them all the way round into the Manoliassa Valley from the centre and right. Even the men themselves were not informed as to the reason of

this countermarch—in fact only the General Staff officers were informed of when the final attempt upon the Yannina defences would be made.

In order to prevent the more distant Turkish forts co-operating in the defence of the Turkish right, they were kept under a heavy fire by the whole of the Greek artillery from the moment the forward movement commenced.

As regards the paragraphs of the Prince's dispatch dealing with Santi Quaranta and Fourkas it is interesting to note how the military conceptions of the royal commander were not unmingled with guile. He gave orders for a fleet consisting of twelve vessels to threaten a disembarkation at Santi Quaranta, which was duly carried out on the most approved lines of the stage army—the vessels disembarking the same men over and over again, and re-embarking them surreptitiously in between whiles. In order to meet this threatened danger, the Turkish General Djavid Pasha (not to be confounded with that other Djavid Pasha who was killed at Manoliassa in December), the same who eventually retreated into Albania after the fall of Yannina, instead of coming in with his 9,000 men to swell the Turkish garrison of Bisani, detached half his strength towards Delvino in Western Epirus, whilst with the remaining half he remained some thirty kilometres to the north of Yannina to meet the threatened movement of the Greek 3rd Division, who made a great show of marching on Yannina from Korytsa (in the north), whilst other Greek troops threatened a movement towards Fourkas.

It was really these strategical threats even more than the tactical movements which upset the Turkish calculations, so Essad Pasha himself tells me; for his staff believed that the Greeks would not make any serious attempt on the Yannina defences until these threatening movements had closed in, and the Turkish staff calculated that this could not be for at least another seven days. The general attack on March 5th, therefore, took the Turks entirely by surprise. Hopelessly outmanœuvred, they had nothing else to do save to surrender.

A word of praise is due, I venture to think, to King

Constantine in that he should have contented himself with such a comparatively bloodless victory (for of all the assaults on the Yannina defences, the final attack cost the Greeks infinitely the least in casualties). Coming as he did from the victories of Macedonia, where his army had sacrificed itself freely in order to attain crushing victory—coming at the time when he did, when Greece and Europe were sick of the very name of Yannina, there must have been a strong temptation for him on the evening of March 5th, to win a sweeping success and make the name of Yannina one to stink for ever in Turkish nostrils. He held the Turkish army in the hollow of his hand. At the sacrifice of a few hundred extra Greek lives, a sacrifice which would have been made readily for the asking, he could practically have exterminated the whole Turkish garrison. Phwat Bey himself told me that on the night of March 5th that was the fate that he anticipated for the whole of the Bisani garrison. But the future King of Greece was merciful as he was strong. He issued no hasty order. He gave Essad Pasha time to realise the hopelessness of further fighting, and he was allowed to surrender. Perhaps the magnanimity of this action may not be fully appreciated by my English readers, and doubtless has not even yet dawned upon the King's own subjects, but I myself cannot help seeing what a temptation it must have been to King Constantine. At one stroke he could have wiped out the whole Turkish forces in Epirus—he who had succeeded Sapountzakis, he who had been beaten by the Turks in 1897, when Sapountzakis was his chief of staff. He could have said to the world, "Where Sapountzakis found failure, I at my first venture annihilated the enemy"—and what a card to play in the little three-cornered game with the other Allies, who found Adrianople and Scutari such hard nuts to crack! As it was, Constantine was content with a brilliant victory instead of playing for the literal annihilation of his adversary.

The siege of Yannina must, I maintain, find a place amongst the great sieges of history which do credit alike to the courage and endurance of besieged and besieger. For six months the Turkish garrison had been practically an isolated force, whilst for four months the troops had

been besieged and held to their trenches without communication from the outside world. That charming little book written by Guy Chantepleure, "La Ville Assiégée," tells us how difficult were the conditions of life within the city, and I myself bear full testimony to the terrible hardships endured by the Greek soldiery besieging the fortress. Ever since Plevna, the fighting prowess of the Turk besieged has been proverbial, and Adrianople, Scutari, Tchataldja and Yannina have enhanced that reputation. If towards the last the Turkish garrison had dwindled somewhat, and a large percentage of their men (nearly 7,000) were in hospital, critics may be inclined to believe that this fact detracts from the merit of the Greeks in taking the place, but I beg to differ. Of the two combatants I maintain that the Greeks had by far the roughest time of it, and if at the end they were in better health than the Turks, this is, I venture to think, entirely due to the extremely abstemious life habitually led by the Greek, be he rich or poor, and to that flame of patriotic ardour which never failed to warm his heart on the coldest night or in the most hungry days.

CHAPTER XVII

THE CONQUERED CITY

THOSE of my readers who have never shared in the privations of a siege can hardly hope to realise the pale monotony of life that obsesses alike those within and without the beleaguered lines. To the Greeks Yannina meant infinitely more than it did to the Turks, for Yannina has been a Greek city from time immemorial : it includes to-day a population of some 14,000 Greeks, 2,000 Albanians, 3,000 Jews and perhaps 1,000 Turks. It was ever in ancient days the capital of Epirus, the province perhaps in which Greek blood runs more wildly patriotic than in any other province of Greece. History tells us of Chimariots, that Greek seaboard colony that never yet has owned allegiance to any alien conqueror ; Byron tells us of the Souliots, who preferred wholesale death to subjugation ; and one has no need to look further than the ranks of the Greek Army of to-day to find how truly Greek is the spirit of the people of Epirus. In modern times, indeed, many of those who have done most for Greece have sprung from Epirot stock. Under these conditions it may be imagined how keen and anxious were the Greek people to once more see Epirus a Greek province.

It was this hope, I think, which largely helped the Greek troops in front of Yannina to support that terrible winter investment. It must be remembered that no Greek contingent was less than 5,000 ft. in the air, that there was no such thing as a house or shelter for any of us, and that the *tente d'abris* which each man carried on his back, together with one thin blanket and a thread-bare overcoat, was the only protection we had from the ceaseless rain and the not infrequent snow. The officers

and men alike only possessed the clothes they stood up in, and as these wore out from much usage, their warmth diminished. There was not one man in ten that had a whole pair of soles to his boots, and many had no boots at all. Frost-bite was common amongst the soldiery, for firewood was very hard to come by, even when the troops were allowed to light fires. Moreover, food was appallingly scarce. I do not think I exaggerate when I say that the average amount of food actually obtained by the Greek soldier would not exceed $\frac{1}{2}$ of a kilo of bread a day (usually ten days old), and perhaps an average of one ounce of vegetables and the same quantity of meat. Absolutely nothing else, save once in a while the luxury of a cup of coffee. It is not much to keep life going in a healthy man who may at any moment be called upon to enter upon three or four days' continued fighting.

I cannot dismiss this subject without remembering how sometimes it was my good luck, when I had managed somehow to replenish my own larder, to be able to offer to some of these half-starving, entirely frozen, yet never complaining soldiery, the priceless boon of a cup of chocolate, a seat by the fire, and perhaps a dried fig or two and a cigarette. Men have come to my little shelter-tent after twenty-four hours in the outpost line absolutely sodden with wet, dropping with weariness, and yearning for food. Thinking, perhaps, that I was some adventurous coffee-stall man, they have asked in that dead voice which bespeaks little hope of a favourable answer whether I had any food to sell. I had not the heart to refuse the poor devils. My payment was ample when I saw the blood gradually come back to their cheeks as they drank such refreshment as I had to offer. Those who have seen the poor tramp on the Thames Embankment sip his cup of hot coffee at 5 of a winter morning, will realise in a minor degree the feelings I enjoyed as I watched them partake of my (alas!) very restricted hospitality. There was not a day in front of Bizani when an enterprising vendor (if such had existed) could not have sold hot cocoa at a sovereign a glass-full amongst the more wealthy soldiery.

The country over which the two armies were fighting

was practically a desert so far as inhabitants and vegetation were concerned, and a bitterly cold one at that. Such few habitations (I will not say houses) as had existed had been burnt by the Albanian redifs. If anything was more disheartening than the climate and the lack of food and fire, it was the moral effect of the everlasting waiting. The soldiers had begun to wonder whether all these sacrifices of theirs were doing any good. When the Crown Prince came, these doubts at least were spared us, and in the six weeks of his rule the spirit and appearance of the Greek Army improved immensely and visibly.

Inside the Yannina defences exactly the converse was happening. At the commencement of the campaign the attenuated Turkish Divisions did extremely well despite their inferior numbers. At Grimbovo they had done as well as could have been expected under the circumstances. The fall of Preveza was, it is true, a disgrace and a minor catastrophe, and at Pentepigardia the Redif Division, composed of Albanian reservists, had showed the white feather; but the Nizam Division under Phwat Bey had fought splendidly at Pesta and extricated itself out of a dangerous position with consummate skill and courage. Five days after, at Manoliassa and Eytoraki, the Turks had taken a costly revenge for their defeat at Pesta, whilst at Drisko they had gained a decisive victory over the Greek right. They had received heavy reinforcements, and Djavid Pasha's Army was still to come up.

On January 19th the spirit of the Turkish garrison was excellent. After that day all circumstances combined to reduce them towards despair. The fighting on the 20th showed them how near the Greeks could come to success, even when badly handled; the Crown Prince's arrival, the meagre news of Turkish defeats in other areas of the theatre of war, typhoid, and above all the lack of wheat bread, played havoc alike with their morale and their physique. It was the ghost of an army that surrendered Yannina on March 6th. Alone Djavid Pasha's Division escaped that final catastrophe, partly because his troops were too far away to be tactically involved, and partly because his men alone were capable of marching. The actual garrison of the Yannina defences were physical wrecks. For days after the surrender of the town, the



A GREEK CHAUFFEUR GIVING HIS RATIONS TO STARVING TURKISH SOLDIERS AFTER THEY HAD SURRENDERED.



THE BARRACK SQUARE AT YANNINA AS THE GREEKS FOUND IT.
The figures are Turkish soldiers, dead and dying of exhaustion.

Turkish prisoners continued to die like flies from sickness, exhaustion and hunger. Hundreds of them were buried daily.

The Crown Prince's first act after the surrender of the city was to make over all the foodstuffs of his own troops to the Turkish authorities; and the Greek soldiers—who had not eaten for twenty-four hours, stood by whilst their prisoners consumed their food, and I do not think there was one of them who grudged his ration to his late enemy.

The Turkish staff officers, Essad Pasha, Faik, Phwat, and Vehib, indeed, spoke to me in glowing terms of the humane behaviour alike of Greek senior officers and of the common soldiery. The prisoners had no appearance of manhood left—they resembled long-suffering animals. I have seen a whole battalion of prisoners being marched over a desolate country road escorted only by three Greek soldiers, whose chief duty appeared to be in helping along the more weary and exhausted ones. With backs bent almost double, haggard eyes whose murky depths appeared to hide all the sorrow of the universe, these miserable beings stumbled along with bent knees and shuffling feet. Every now and again one would sink with exhaustion and have to be helped to continue the way either by his comrades or by the Greek escort.

The barrack square at Yannina itself was covered with Turkish soldiers in various stages of death. The hospitals contained as many dead as living, some of them dead since many days. When the Greek Army entered Yannina it was not so much a city of the dead as a city of the dying.

The welcome extended to the conqueror by the population was overwhelming. The hope, deferred through countless centuries, had been realised at last—Yannina was Greek, and the men, women and children knelt in the streets and kissed the almost bootless feet of the Greek soldiers as they swept in through the narrow, filth-covered streets.

One story I heard which *se non è vero, è ben trovato*, and has the merit of being in absolute keeping with the poetical nature of the Greek soldier.

On his way to make his official entry into Yannina the

Prince had to pass through three batteries of heavy guns at Kaneta. The gunners had crowned the muzzles of the now silent guns with wreaths of laurel, and they made a very imposing sight. The Prince reined up his horse, and glancing at the rock-strewn bleak hillsides, turned to a corporal who was standing beside his gun. "That is fine," he said. "The guns deserve their decoration; but where in the devil in this wilderness did you find the laurels?"

"Sire!" replied the ready-witted soldier, "wherever *you* pass the laurels sprout!" There are better courtiers in the army of Greece than in Athens!

Yannina itself hardly seems worth all the blood which for centuries has been shed for her. A few fine public buildings and a few large private houses alone exist to show that the place is a capital, otherwise it is not unlike a dozen up-country towns in Egypt. Several mud streets, indented with deep holes, meander betwixt single-storied shops and dwelling-houses. Here and there a pavement gives an impression of civilisation. If it were not for the beautiful lake and for its history Yannina would make but a poor appeal to the imagination. As it is, however, with the rocky island set in the lake, the minarets of Ali Pasha's mosque, the ancient battlements of the old castle, and the mighty mountain range which overlooks the lake, one must indeed be dead to romance to remain unimpressed by the lake-side city. To me the impression will ever be of a sinister kind. I had waited so many weary months to enter the town, and when at last the road lay open I found it so full of horrors that all the anticipated pleasure fled. The day after my arrival at Yannina I followed the Greek Army down to Argyrocastro in pursuit of Djavid's flying army, and the day that I returned to the city I learnt the news of King George's assassination.

Yannina has ever been a town of ill omen for Greece. Greek blood has flown copiously in her streets, and even in the hour of victory King Constantine learnt that he, too, must pay his toll of sorrow for the conquest of the mountain city. It is not for me to lay stress upon the affliction of the Greek Royal family, for I know that they sorrow still acutely for the monarch who died at his post.

King George's testament, was a document which will keep his memory ever green in the hearts not only of the country that he loved and served so well, but in the homely intimate circle of his family. At the time that his testament was made public I penned the following lines, which I dedicate humbly to his memory :—

A KINGLY TESTAMENT

Thus I bequeath my wealth unto my seed
 Unmeasured by affection's biassed sway,
 But counting only what each one may need
 To play the part that he is called to play.

And you, my son, whom Greece will now call king,
 March straight and firm down duty's narrow path,
 Deaf to the Siren songs your heart may sing,
 Urging your head to ill-consider'd wrath.

Let counsels of the night await the dawn,
 Let sleep bring moderation to your blood ;
 Thus shall the joyous sunshine of the morn
 Dry all the tears of yester even's flood.

Remember this, as through the field of life
 You plough the lonely furrow of your way,
 To quench the passing flame of party strife
 You must yourself the rôle of victim play.

A king is but the slave of those he rules,
 A slave to keep the nation's honour clean,
 And coax the tardy loyalty of fools
 To realise what king and country mean.

And you must learn to be more greek than Greek,
 Learn to forget the land whence sprang your race,
 Forget the tongue that I taught you to speak,
 Once I am laid in my last resting-place.

And thou, Hellas ! that I have loved so well
 And strived to serve so long as life did last,
 Accept my blessing and my last farewell :
 For thee to-morrow—but for me the past !

And thou my queen, my helpmate and my love,
 Who shared each joy and sorrow that was mine,
 Mourn not for me ! There is a home above
 Where we shall share a kingdom all divine.

ALBERT H. TRAPMANN.

ATHENS,

April 14th, 1913.

CHAPTER XVIII

EPIRUS AND ALBANIA, WITH SOME GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS OF POLICY

I DO not in this chapter propose to enter into the burning controversy of to-day as to whether Albania is to have the right to govern North and Western Epirus, because those who understand the situation know all that I would say, whilst those who do not understand it could not hope to inform themselves in the course of one short chapter. I propose rather to describe Epirus as I found it twelve short hours after its occupation by the Greek army, and, rejecting the unworthy jealousies of contemporaneous Europe, I propose to dip lightly into the past and paint the inevitable future—inevitable, I say advisedly, because sooner or later Epirus must work out her own salvation either in spite of Europe or with Europe's help. Victorious armies have sometimes been known to turn a hostile country into a neutral land: we have the examples of Poland, of Alsace-Lorraine and others; but never yet in history have we had an example of a state liberated by a victorious army bowing in bondage to an alien yoke. It may not be in our time, nor yet in the time of our children (though I for one believe that the next few years will see the fact accomplished), but sooner or later Greater Epirus will be governed from Athens. Much blood may yet have to be shed, but sooner or later the inborn hellenism of the people of Epirus will surmount all obstacles and claim unity with Greece, just as Crete has done.

To the traveller in Epirus there can be no doubt as to the nationality of the inhabitants. Had Epirus really been Albanian in sympathy, it is unlikely that the Albanian troops would have burnt a hundred and fifty

Epirot villages and massacred all the inhabitants thereof who fell into their hands. In the Arghyrocastro valley, where the villages are larger, the Albanians did not dare to carry on their work of devastation, because they knew that to do so they would have to fight, and the Albanian has no stomach for fighting unless success and much loot are assured.

The Epirot is a hardy mountain peasant, simple in character, intensely simple in his life and customs. For him three great factors complete an effective code of ethics: (1) His blind and childish belief in the Orthodox Church and all its teachings; (2) A simple adherence to the patriarchal laws of the sacredness of family ties; (3) His devotion to the traditions of Hellas. To him nothing else really matters. Death, wealth, poverty, hunger, privations, are but the incidents of life.

If we compare the mental attitude of the Epirot peasant with that of the over-civilised, cultured citizen of a western state, we shall see that the Epirot's three rules of life replace those which a more peaceful and advanced culture have forced upon the western European. If in France, England and Germany the sacred flame of religion has burnt low, it has been replaced by conscience and considerations of public opinion. The Epirot, having retained his religion with full faith, does not trouble himself about conscience or public opinion. He strives to live so as to satisfy his priest. The Westerner has developed a mighty respect and fear of the law of the land in which he lives; the Epirot through centuries of foreign rule has really only recognised the old patriarchal law of family rights. He obeys the law of the land just sufficiently to keep himself out of prison, but the patriarchal law, with all its rigorous moral code, he obeys implicitly because it is *THE LAW* made by his ancestors the ancient Greeks. Not to obey it would be to make himself an outcast and a pariah.

There is something noble and fine about this patriarchal law, which impresses the Westerner with the innate goodness and grandness of those ancient philosophic law-givers and makes one feel what a poor thing, in the ethical sense, is our much-vaunted Western modern civilisation. We must make laws and levy rates and taxes and appeal

to Christianity in order to afford our poor sufficient food and shelter to keep body and soul together. In Epirus there is no necessity for appeal. The poor man has the uncontested right to share in the wealth of the richer members of his family. The old and maimed are honoured members of the family gathering. The rule of life is very simple within the family circle. Those who can work and earn money pool their earnings, and the head of the family administers the pool according to immemorial custom.

I recollect investigating one particular instance, which may serve to illustrate my meaning. The family consisted of some thirty souls, the majority of whom were too old to work; but the family owned three houses, and in these according to domestic ties and birth were grouped the members of the family. The two chief bread-winners were in America, whence they sent back regular remittances—not to their wives, be it noted, but to the head of the family—their grandfather. I asked him if he was not grateful to his grandchildren for keeping him and his in their old age, but he was astonished at the question; such a point of view had never occurred to him. The boys were good boys, they were Greeks, and in sending back nine-tenths of their earnings they were merely adhering to the canons of family law. They could not do otherwise. In England one-third of that family would have been supported by the parish or begged for charity, whilst the wives of the two bread-winners would have spent their husbands' savings in dress and ostentation, and in giving to their children an education calculated to make them discontented with their station in life! Such are the milestones along the road of the civilisation of which we are so proud—a road which often leads to the workhouse, and leads there through a barren country of selfishness and self-indulgence! If there is little wealth or luxury in Epirus, there is at least no abject poverty.

The Westerner, especially the Englishman, is very proud of his own personal honour; but the honour of the Epirot is the honour of Hellas—neither more nor less. However clean the personal honour of an Epirot might be, he would count it soiled if at the same time he was

not doing his utmost to keep untarnished the honour and traditions of the Hellenic race.

At the time of the Russo-Japanese War we in England learnt with amazement of Japanese girls who sold their honour in order that they might give to their country's cause. Such a case could not occur in Epirus because of the laws of family and of religion, and because of the innate chastity of the Epirot woman; but women and men alike would lightly sacrifice all that they held most dear rather than be a party to an affront upon the honour of Hellas. It is for this reason that I foresee troublous times ahead for Epirus and for those misguided folk who desire to force the Epirot to accept an alien rule.

Through countless centuries under alien rule they have known how to preserve intact their religion, their language, and their love for Greece; it is hardly likely that, now that they have tasted the sweets of union with their brothers of Hellas, when for the first time in centuries they have had the opportunity of arming and organising themselves to resistance, they will not make a desperate fight of it. "Union (with Greece) or death" is the motto that adorns every hut and house throughout the land, the cry that is on every lip, and the firm purpose that is in every heart.

If Europe imagines for one moment that the Epirot is attempting to play a game of bluff, she is giving proof of incredible ignorance of the aspirations and character of this sturdy, simple-minded people. Many people and nations have from time to time in the height of their power attempted to denationalise the Epirot. Rome, Venice, Serbia, Bulgaria, Turkey, Skander Beg and Ali Pasha—each in turn has spent his strength and treasure, enjoyed the questionable advantages of a military occupation of the country, but none has ever yet succeeded in making a single Epirot change his nationality. It is not likely that the Marquis de San Giuliano and Sir Edward Grey will succeed where these have failed, even when backed by the Prince de Wied and the Kingdom of autonomous Albania. If it were not so infinitely sad it would be infinitely ridiculous.

But it is not the Hellenic population alone of Epirus that must be reckoned with; the Albanian Moslem colonies

in Epirus are almost as anxious for union with Greece as the Epirots themselves. At the time of the Greek occupation, and as recently as last November (1913), I have spoken with many of these Albanian notables. If they cannot have union with Greece, they will declare for an independent and autonomous Epirus.

In England we have made but little attempt to probe the nature of the Greek character. Whilst some, who have only met the Greek in Asia Minor or Egypt, believe him to be what we contemptuously term a Levantine, others, less travelled, are content to think that the Greek is on about the same footing as the more decadent Latin races, such as the Portuguese and the Spanish. The only meridional characteristics I have found in the Greek are that he is swift to anger, and that he is idle when his heart is not in his work. The Epirot is more Greek than the Greeks of the Hellenic kingdom. He is slower to anger, and the hard conditions of life make it impossible for him to be idle. But whatever his failings may be, vain boasting is not one of them. The Epirot soldiers who gave up their lives in the war never by any chance thought themselves heroes, nor were they treated as heroes by their countrymen—they gave up their lives simply because it was their duty to Hellas to do so. The Epirot is no braggart, nor does he court the public admiration. The blood that ran in the veins of the ancient Spartans runs strong in his veins to-day. I for one am convinced that he will fight bitterly and to the end against annexation to Albania. He will fight, but he will not boast about it beforehand nor afterwards, for he will feel that he will only be doing his duty.

I will give one example which I hope will give the reader some insight into the patient, purposeful nature of the Epirot peasant. In November 1913 I was, on behalf of the *Daily Telegraph*, undertaking a tour through Epirus at the time that the International Boundary Commission were executing their labours. I had planned to motor from Yannina to Arghyrocastro, a distance of fifty-six miles, but the weather broke in such a deluge of rain that at the last moment I altered my mind and postponed my trip to the following day. I had, however, mentioned my proposed journey, and news of it got abroad,

and the Epirots of the Arghyrocastro valley determined that I at least should learn whether their sentiments were Greek or Albanian, wherefore they planned to leave their villages *en masse* and to line the roadway along which I must pass. I of course was in ignorance of their intentions, nor ever thought my movements could be of interest, so I failed to notify anybody of the change in my plans.

The following afternoon, when the weather had abated, I left Yannina, and so soon as I entered the Arghyrocastro valley I found the roadway lined with two endless walls of Epirot peasantry. They had stood thus ever since the morning of the previous day through all that dreadful night of rain without food or shelter, *men, women and children*, determined that I should see them and judge for myself the sincerity of their cry "Union or death." For twenty miles and more I motored through this living avenue of rain-sodden peasantry, but not one reproached me for having kept them so long waiting. To one old woman of ninety years, indeed, I offered my apology. "Nay!" she said, "it is nothing! So should we stand, if it would serve, until Union with Greece or death!" And in all that vast concourse of humanity there was not one human being but held a modern rifle. Is it a wonder that I am impressed with the determination of the Epirot to make good his boast of Union or death? If it were not for their wonderful physique and endurance, that thirty hours of waiting in the deluge alone would have cost many a score of lives.

I would for a moment consider the prospects of Albania. Here we have a tract of mountain lands inhabited by a semi-civilised people of a prehistoric race who perhaps number some 1,800,000 souls. In the north they are Catholics, in the south and central Albania they are mostly Moslems, and a mutual hatred between Northerners and Southerners tends to emphasise the bitterness of their religious differences. Added to this insuperable barrier there is the fact that the various Albanian patois differ to such an extent that the man from Scutari chooses Greek or Turkish or French when he condescends to converse with the hated Southron from Avlona. From time immemorial the communities who inhabit the

poverty-stricken land have been governed by the rich Beys, or landowners, who have maintained all the old feudal customs of a thousand years ago, and who plot and fight against each other with zeal and cruelty. Not even in the days of Skander Beg or of Ali Pasha did these Beys for long put aside their private quarrels in order to combine into some semblance of a united state. They have always intrigued against their various conquerors, it is true, but not more consistently than they have intrigued and fought against each other. During the next few years they will have the delight of intriguing against their king and of playing off the divided interests of Italy, Austria, and Greece, not to mention those of Serbia and of Montenegro.

The Beys naturally welcome the pleasing prospect, for there will be fat years of rich bribes from Italy and Austria, there will be priceless opportunities of looting the Greek and Serbian homes within their boundaries, and it is not the Beys who will have to do the fighting but their retainers. The *bona-fide* Albanian peasants and such few traders as exist do not welcome the prospect. The rule of one Albanian Bey is bad enough, but that of an oligarchy of Beys is something that hardly bears contemplation. The Beys are not likely to be content with extorting a lesser revenue than heretofore out of their luckless tenants, whilst in addition there will be the taxes to the state and the Beys' own taxes to the State. The Albanian peasant will have to pay all these. In the days of the Turkish rule taxes were seldom, if ever, collected, and one wonders if the Prince de Wied will be more successful than Abdul Hamid.

It is common knowledge¹ that Austria and Italy have good reasons of their own for wishing to create an autonomous Albania, apart from the thinly-disguised hopes which each cherishes that one day he will be able to add the whole (or a portion) of the new kingdom to his own possessions. If the reasonable, logical course were pursued of dividing Albania up between Serbia, Montenegro and Greece, then Italy and Austria would find two possibly hostile powers established along the Adriatic, and, apart from naval considerations, the trade of both

¹ See footnote at end of following chapter.

nations would suffer severely. With Greece and Serbia in possession of Southern and Central Albania it would be good-bye to all Italian dreams of adding Avlona to the prosperous (?) colonies of the house of Savoy, and good-bye to Austrian dreams of further peaceful (?) penetration into the Balkan Peninsula.

One cannot refrain from admiring the masterly diplomacy and cunning of Vienna in her action towards the Balkan States. By a policy of studied consecutive pinpricks she managed to arouse Italy to a sense of her interests in the Adriatic, and then by exaggerating Italy's opposition Austria succeeded in conveying an idea to the Balkan States that Italy alone was hostile to their expansion along the Adriatic littoral. By this insidious means the astute Austrian diplomatists were able to create in the minds of the Serbian and Greek peoples a distinct hostility and feeling of resentment against Italy. Austria, as ever, continued to pose as the disinterested friend of the Balkan States, the while she used her best endeavours to poison their minds against other powers.

When the inner history of the past ten years of Balkan Affairs and diplomacy comes to be written by one who knows the inwardness of things it will be edifying to discover how in turn Austria has used every endeavour to set each and all of the Balkan States against each other whilst at the same time she has tried to unite them in a feeling of enmity against Italy. Whether Austria has been playing for her own hand alone remains to be seen, but it is just possible that she has been aiming at an even deeper object, and that her Balkan policy has been inspired by Pan-Germanic influences not totally unconnected with Berlin and Potsdam.

The Balkan Peninsula is rapidly being drawn into the net of European equilibrium; with Roumania, Serbia, Greece and Montenegro in the balance of the Triple Entente, Austria will have to look to Bulgaria and Turkey as possible make-weights on the side of the Triple Alliance. It behoves the Triple Entente Powers therefore to closely watch any signs of a *rapprochement* between Bulgaria and Turkey.

CHAPTER XIX

GREECE AND SEA POWER IN THE MEDITERRANEAN

FOR some years now those who love their England best have been urging upon her statesmen to think Imperially. I wish to take this opportunity of asking the same people to implore our statesmen to think also for the future. To England, with her teeming millions, her world-wide colonies, her immense wealth and her overpowering navy, the Greece of yesterday seemed but a tiny speck upon the map of the world, and the Greece of to-day has not yet come to the comprehension of our statesmen. Let us, ere the sands begin to run down in the hour-glass of European diplomacy, consider the possibilities of the Greece of to-morrow, but let us first clear from our minds all preconceived ideas we may have formed of Greece and of the Hellenes, their capabilities, their ambitions and their power. Let us look at this question impartially and with an open, unbiassed mind.

Of late years England, in order to keep pace with German naval ambitions, has gradually been obliged to concentrate her battle fleets more and more in home waters. She has seen herself obliged first to weaken, and later to withdraw, her farther-flung squadrons, until even in the Mediterranean, that main artery of our Imperial system, we have had to husband our forces.

With Egypt and Gibraltar in our hands the Mediterranean can be converted into a lake at pleasure, but NOT into an *English lake*, for the shipbuilding programmes of Austria and Italy make it clear that they will dispute the supremacy of the Triple Entente in Mediterranean waters; and even Turkey, with her growing German tendencies, is dreaming of something resembling a fleet. It is Turkey who stands astride the Dardanelles, and might render the Russian fleet unable to co-operate with

England and France in the Mediterranean. In the event of war how does England propose to maintain freedom of transit for British shipping through the Mediterranean? Obviously such squadrons as England and France can spare must endeavour to "bottle up" the Italian and Austrian fleets in the Adriatic and join hands with the Russian Black Sea fleet in the Ægean after it has passed the Dardanelles. A glance at the map will show the strategical value of the Ægean Islands (which now belong to Greece), amongst which a flotilla of destroyers and light cruisers, skilfully handled, might well dispute the right of way between the Mediterranean and the Black Sea. It would make all the difference if the Ægean waters were held by Italian craft, or those of a friendly maritime nation!

Again, if we take the problem of "bottling up" the Adriatic Sea, it is evident that, although such an enterprise could be undertaken with Malta as a base, it would be infinitely easier if torpedo flotillas could be based upon Corfu.

With such considerations in mind it would seem, then, that it would be to the interests of the Triple Entente to ensure the co-operation of the State who rules over the Ægean and Ionian Islands, apart from all other considerations; but when it is realised that the State in question is Greece—Greece, nine-tenths of whose sailors speak English, Greece who is united to France by a dozen bonds of sympathy, Greece who, despite our recent cold attitude towards her, still remembers with gratitude Navarino and the gift of the Ionian Islands, Greece who produces to-day, without doubt or exception, the finest race of sailor folk in all the world—Greece who, realising the value of sea-power, has made up her mind to make every sacrifice in order to enable her to make full profit of her splendid strategic position from a naval point of view—why should England hesitate?

The naval Mission of nineteen distinguished naval officers who, under the direction of Admiral Kerr, are now reorganising the Greek fleet, could ensure co-operation both in policy and in practice; the only doubt which can lurk in the mind of the home-staying Englishman is whether Greece is a country capable of making the

necessary sacrifices to render her co-operation worth seeking. Let us consider the proposition.

When Khartoum fell to the Anglo-Egyptian Army, under Lord Kitchener, we English went into hysterics of self-praise over the splendid way the British officer had taught the *Fellah* of Egypt to stand up like a man and fight; we also pointed with some excusable pride to our financial control, which had made it possible within the scope of a generation for a bankrupt nation to wage a successful war without feeling the strain unduly.

But what we have done in Egypt the Greeks have surpassed in Greece. The troops who fled from Larissa in 1897 captured Salonika from Turkey in 1912, and Yannina in 1913, and still had strength to wage a victorious campaign against Bulgaria in the summer of that year. It was not one campaign, but three which Greece fought so victoriously, and it adds to her prowess when we remember the bankrupt state of her finances so short a while ago as 1900.

An exchange which stood at 165 drachmas for 100 francs then has now sunk to par, and that although there is no gold currency in Greece! It may be news to England that, despite the expense of over one year's mobilisation and of three campaigns, the rate of exchange has not varied, and the price of Greek bonds has actually risen three points. There are people in England, people who ought to know better, who believe that all Balkan States are bankrupt, and that Greece is amongst the number. Greece has maintained a mobilised army of close upon 300,000 men, and kept her fleet at sea for over one year, without adding more than eleven million pounds to her national debt.

Surely this is a masterly lesson in Statesmanship and Finance, and gives every reason to believe that there is no cause to think lightly of the financial recuperative powers of Greece. There remains only the question of the will to increase her naval strength and the ability to furnish the personnel. Of the former she has given abundant proof, and if additional proof be wanted it is to be found in the fact that she is now paying to each member of the English Mission a salary more than three times greater than that of her own Prime Minister.

As to the ability of the Greek mariner there cannot possibly be two opinions. His seamanship merits universal admiration ; his calm daring and his resource are only equalled by the best traditions of our own service. In the islands of the Ægean Sea, Greece has got a recruiting ground for her navy such as we ourselves may well envy, and those English sailors who are most intimately acquainted with the Greek mariner will endorse my words. A hundred instances of resourcefulness and courage were displayed by Greek sailors throughout the recent war both in the navy and in the mercantile marine, instances which, had they occurred on British ships, would have filled columns of our newspapers, but which in Greece have been allowed to pass almost unnoticed. The Greek sailor does not achieve heroic deeds in order to bring honour to himself, but only and simply to forward the cause of Hellas. I venture to think that ere another decade has passed the Greek Navy will be one with which it would be an honour even for the British Navy to be allied, and I submit that, apart from the question of honour, such an alliance would be practical and useful to both parties concerned.

When our Radical statesmen have done squabbling over the fate of Ulster and other domestic matters, perhaps they will turn their attention to World Politics and consider, incidentally, British naval supremacy in the Mediterranean, the main artery of our Empire ; at present it is only at the Admiralty and in the Service Clubs that such details receive consideration.

I have no pretensions to prophetic foresight, but I do pretend to some understanding of the aspirations and capabilities of the Greek nation ; whether the Powers of the Triple Entente have sufficient perspicacity to march with the times—or ahead of the times—and see where their own interests lie, is on the knees of the gods, but it is evident to me that the day that the great Powers are sufficiently involved in their own jealousies, fears and quarrels to preclude them from interfering with the aspirations of the Balkan States that day will see Greece and Serbia absorbing Albania, and Greece and Roumania threatening Constantinople itself. It is a possibility which may seem absurd to Europe, now that there is

European peace, but to me it is a certainty of the future. That Epirus and Thrace will eventually belong to Greece I do not doubt for one second ; the only question to my mind worthy of consideration is whether her occupation of those territories will be accomplished with the goodwill of the Triple Alliance or of the Triple Entente. It behoves the statesmen of England and of Greece to mutually study the question, for nothing but good could come of a closer understanding between the two countries.

. The preceding chapters were written in January 1914. In view of recent events I might well have decided to re-write them ; I have preferred, however, to let them stand as written, since they will possess the historic value of showing what a close student of Balkan politics believed at the time. In some sense the chapters have proved prophetic. Soon after they were written the Epirots successfully defied the Great Powers and declared an autonomous Epirot State, of which my friend M. Zographos was the governor. When M. Venizelos resigned the premiership of Greece, M. Zographos accepted the portfolio of Minister of Foreign Affairs in the new Cabinet. The union of Epirus and Greece is now practically a *fait accompli*.

Since the great war cloud has broken over the world, Turkey has thrown in her lot with the Germanic Powers, and Italy has been moved to join the Powers of the *Entente* chiefly because of her difference with Austria over the Balkan problems. That Greece will follow suit is a certainty, and it is probable that her declaration of war will nearly coincide with the publication of this book.

ENVOI TO PART I

[In the spring of 1913 the Great Powers endeavoured to induce Greece to conclude peace with Turkey, and to surrender to the mercies of an autonomous Albania the Greek Christian province of Epirus.]

PAX HELLENICA

(These lines were by permission dedicated to H.M. King Constantine)

There are women greatly proven in the myriad isles of Greece
Who are yearning long-expectant for an honourable peace.
By the sea-board where the mountains find their mirage in the foam
There are women—waiting! waiting! for those who come not home.

“ Thus and thus shall run thy frontiers,” comes the mandate of the
Great—
“ Here and here! thy soldiers' life-blood shall enrich an alien state,
We have pondered o'er the matter, and we deem that it is best
That a Christian people suffer so that Europe may have rest! ”

Shall we listen to the summons, and humbly eat our pride?
See exchanged the Cross for Crescent as we lay our arms aside
At the bidding of the Powers? And vow their word stands good,
Or claim the land as Christian yet with war's Red Cross of blood?

Cry shame on Christian Europe! Cry shame on craven peace!
God gives us strength and courage yet to strike for Christian Greece!
So shall the sword we still hold bared bring glory to His Name,
And so our soldier-king shall sign a peace unsmirch'd by shame!

PART II
*THE THIRTY DAYS' CAMPAIGN IN
MACEDONIA*

CHAPTER I

CAUSES OF THE WAR

FROM time immemorial Macedonia has been the cockpit of the Balkan Tom Tiddler's ground for the rival nationalities which have from century to century risen to power, abused that power and gradually again sunk into comparative insignificance. Two thousand years ago it was the cradle of Greek glory; fifteen centuries later the conquering Turk crushed the inhabitants under his heel, enslaving and massacring in the name of the Holy Crescent; and yet another hundred years, and the wild Bulgars—a rustic branch of the Tartar race, beat the Turk both in battle, guile and mendacity, and for a few decades held Macedonia under their brief rule. Far-away colonies of Bulgarian peasants were brought down to inhabit the villages; the original Turkish or Greek inhabitants of which had been exterminated. Later, when the Serbian Empire made its fleeting strength felt, the Serb followed the example which had been set him by his cousin-Slav.

The result of these massacings, colonisations and graftings of alien peoples in an alien land resulted in a mixture which a French chef has immortalised as a Macedoine salad. The villagers themselves are not mixed; a village is either Turkish, Bulgarian, Greek, or Slav. Occasionally, it is true, Greeks by their superior intellect and great gift for commerce have succeeded in establishing themselves in villages other than Greek, and have usually become the wealthiest members of the community. During the past century, also, the Turkish Government preferring the Jew to the Christian, has favoured the Hebrew in his commercial transactions, and thus throughout the country there is a peppering of

Jewish descendants of those Spanish exiles who were driven from their mother country during the gruesome horrors of the Inquisition ; but it is very doubtful whether in their adopted Balkan country these Jews and their descendants have not seen the atrocities from which they had fled in Spain surpassed under the Macedonian skies. The Turk gave the Jew preference, and although his commercial ability is notably inferior to that of the Greek, he managed, in Macedonia at least, not only to make a comfortable livelihood, but also in many cases to oust his Greek rival out of the country. Such was the situation when the infamously famous treaty of Berlin was thrust upon an astonished Balkania.

The Bulgar having for a few brief weeks seen as in a dream a resurrection of his former widespread power, aspired to make that dream come true. With infinite pains, wonderful cunning and remarkable diplomatic ability, he organised throughout Macedonia a campaign which not only fooled the whole of Europe, but almost made the Bulgarian himself believe that he was telling the truth. His methods were twofold : an educational propaganda of the Bulgarian language and nationality, combined with a bloody campaign carried on by hired cut-throats who styled themselves *comitadjis*. *Comitadji* in Bulgarian means assassin, and is peculiarly descriptive of the type of man ; it has become a title of rank and honour, so far at least as Sofia is concerned. Very considerable sums of money were spent on sending forth so-called school teachers escorted by bands of *comitadjis* into villages which were inhabited by a population other than Bulgar. It was the old method of spreading the gospel with a Gatling gun, assisted by a school teacher and a Bulgarian priest ; and it proved extremely effective, for those who did not become Bulgarians, willingly or unwillingly, attained short shrift and a speedy funeral.

For some years this gentle colonisation continued uninterrupted save when the Turk, assisted by the troops of the Turkish Government, retaliated ; then, of course, European Christianity was moved to profound sympathy, which occasionally took the form of cash donations, but was usually confined to expressions of horror by eminent

rhetoricians in the Houses of Parliament and Chambers of Deputies. The Turk was expostulated with diplomatically, and when he told the truth it was of course believed that he told lies, and so finally he reverted to his original creed of telling the thing which was not so. The sympathy of Europe, and especially of Mr. Gladstone, was with the poor Bulgar, and his propaganda flourished exceedingly. Villages, whole tracts of country, valleys, and mountain lands were Bulgarised wholesale, until at last a voice was heard in Athens calling upon the Greek Government to furnish the wherewithal to protect the Greek inhabitants of Macedonia from the more flagrant forms of Bulgarian coercion. Unfortunately the Greek Government turned a deaf ear; it had neither funds nor courage to back up the policy advocated by that devoted band of heroes who wished to protect their compatriots across the border. Greece herself was in the throes of financial difficulty, her status as a kingdom was far from being well established—she was not sure of herself, and even had she been it is very much to be doubted whether at that time she could have scraped together sufficient money to have equipped Greek bands to go into Macedonia and protect the Greek villagers from the attentions of the comitadjis.

At this time (1903) there was one man in Greece—Lieutenant Paul Melas, scion of one of the oldest families, a gallant officer and a man of brains and money—who had the courage of his convictions. Assisted by one or two of his friends, he raised and equipped a band which set forth into Macedonia to do what it could to counteract the hundreds of comitadji bands who were then afflicting that sore-stricken land. It is my privilege to number Paul Melas' brother among my most intimate friends, and I have read through the whole of his correspondence during this period. He knew the sort of work that lay before him, and without going into heroics himself, he told his family squarely that the best thing which could happen for Greece would be that he, himself, should find a martyr's grave somewhere amongst those northern mountains. His letters to his family form a document which, if it were ever put into print and read by people even of an alien race, would cause a choking feeling in

the throat for a man who was so brave, so infinitely capable, and withal so modest.

The story of Melas' death is a great deal better known in Greece than that of Nelson in the British nursery; and I do not propose to record it here, but he died as he hoped—a martyr—and his death was a signal for a wonderful resurrection of the whole Greek people. There was hardly an officer in the Greek army who did not envy him his lonely grave; there was not a man or woman who did not ransack their savings-chest or jewel-box to pour forth money into the funds which should equip bands to avenge Paul Melas' death. The officers of the Greek army took leave wholesale and raised bands to go into Macedonia, and it was only a question of selecting the fittest recruits to follow. What ensued is written in the pages of recent history, which those who wish to learn can read—and blush.

Eventually the Great Powers, after long and tedious negotiations, compromised with the Turkish Government, and for a short while comparative peace reigned in Macedonia. I say comparative peace, because the bands no longer openly made war upon each other and upon the villagers; the Turkish Army no longer sent expeditions to be bribed by either one or other of the contending bands, but the International Gendarmerie walked abroad through the land and managed to prevent the worst excesses. Then came the great political upheaval in Turkey. The International Gendarmerie was recognised as a complete failure, and the new regime took charge: it was a distinction without a difference. Then came the wonderful news that Serb and Bulgar, burying the hatchet of their own intense hatred for each other, had entered into an alliance against the cruelly-hated Turk. As the sands of 1912 ran down through the hour-glass, Greece and Montenegro were brought into the alliance against the Turkish sway.

The result of that war is too recent history and too fresh in the minds of every one to require being detailed here; but I myself, who have ridden during the past months through nearly every village in Eastern Macedonia, can throw some sidelights, hitherto unknown, upon the conduct of the Allies, who, having ousted the Turk,

occupied each his sphere of the country. The Greek, after his easy victories between Ellassona and Salonika, occupied South-Eastern Macedonia towards the end of October, and whilst marching north-westwards on Monastir, he learned the news that the victorious Serbian armies, after their hard-fought battles, had actually entered that town. The Bulgarian general, Theodoreff, with his division, had been given the task of marching direct upon Salonika, wiping aside all opposition, of which he found little; but Satan found some mischief still for idle hands to do. He contented himself with massacring the inhabitants and pillaging and burning all the towns and villages through which his gallant army marched unopposed. Unfortunately for him, he miscalculated his dates, or perhaps I should say the pillaging capacity of his soldiery, for when he reached Salonika he found that Constantine, the then Crown Prince and now King of Greece, had accepted the capitulation of that town from the Turkish general four days previously.

What follows I have on the authority of King Constantine himself. Theodoreff, accompanied by a staff-officer, called upon the king in Salonika when he was occupied attending to some official documents. His only companion was his son George, the present Crown Prince. After some thought he said that he would receive General Theodoreff, and he and his staff-officer were shown in; but unfortunately the king neglected to have any of his own staff officers present at the interview. There had been rain, and Theodoreff begged that two of his battalions, who had suffered greatly from sickness and privation, should be allowed to enter the town and seek the hospitality of a sheltering roof; the king consented, and invited General Theodoreff and his companion to join him and his staff at dinner that night. Dinner was in progress when suddenly down the street boomed the brave music of a military band; naturally people went to the balcony to see who these new troops were who were coming in. It could not be expected that the two sickly Bulgarian battalions would have themselves played into the town by a triumphant band; but such was the case. There were not, however, only two battalions—it was the whole of General Theodoreff's

Division marching through the streets. Whether Theodreff will ever place on record his inmost feelings as he ate his somewhat tough beef-steak with King Constantine's eyes upon him, to the air of the Bulgarian band without, is doubtful; but should he do so I am sure that the monograph will be purchased with avidity by everybody who has a taste for dramatic situations.

To make a long story short, the Bulgarians took the attitude of "J'y suis, J'y reste," and it was not for many months that Salonika was relieved of the presence of the majority of the Bulgarian Division. Eventually General Hessaphtchieff remained in Salonika as the Bulgarian Plenipotentiary attached to the Greek Headquarters staff, and with him remained a battalion of infantry numbering some 1,300 men. The Bulgarian forces in Western Macedonia gradually moved eastwards to participate in the siege of Adrianople and the fighting in front of the Chatalja lines. The country which was evacuated was purely Greek, and as the Greek troops gradually occupied the villages which the Bulgarians had left, the inhabitants crawled back to their village homes to welcome the Greek uniform with wide-stretched arms.

Such was the situation until the end of April in 1913. After the fall of Adrianople and the patched-up peace with Turkey, the Bulgarian troops from Adrianople and Chatalja were set free to return to Macedonia—they came hot haste. Meanwhile the fatal controversy had arisen between Serbia and Bulgaria as to what share of the conquered countries each was entitled to take. According to their treaty of alliance Monastir and Salonika were to go to Bulgaria; but in that treaty Bulgaria had agreed to place 100,000 men at the disposal of the Serbian Headquarters to help fight the Turks in Western Macedonia; also when that treaty was signed it was contemplated that Scutari having been captured by the Montenegrins would be allowed to remain captive of the bow and spear of the gallant men from the Black Mountain, and it was also contemplated that the Serbians would be given a free hand to take such portions of the Northern Albanian coast as they were able to seize by force of arms.

The Serbians truthfully contended that none of these anticipated conditions had been realised; the Powers refused permission to Montenegro to retain Scutari; they refused to allow Serbia to occupy any of the Adriatic littoral or the hinterland thereof, which at the urgent desire of Austria they had decided to give to a new state with which they were going to complicate Balkan politics—the State of Albania. Moreover the Bulgarians had not sent one single man to help the Serbs—in fact the Serbians had been obliged to send 40,000 men to help the Bulgarians effect the fall of Adrianople. Under these circumstances the Serbians contended that the terms of the contract were altered, and that Bulgaria not having performed her share of the bargain, could not claim her share of the spoil, more especially since Serbia would have to compensate Montenegro for losing Scutari, as well as herself wishing to be compensated for losing the much-desired access to the Adriatic. Not only, therefore, did Serbia urgently require a revision of her treaty of alliance with Bulgaria, but Greece, who had come into the alliance on no particular basis of understanding, had with her forces occupied a large portion of the territory which Serbia had promised to give to Bulgaria, especially the splendid seaport of Salonika—the key of the Ægean Sea and the natural port of Balkania.

The Bulgarians refused to have any dealings with Greece until they had settled the question of the conditions of alliance with Serbia. General Hessaptchieff took the pose of pretending to ignore Greece altogether, and to cast contumely in every way within his power, not only upon the Grecian Army, but upon the Princes of the Royal House. Prince Nicholas, the brother of the present King, and military governor of Salonika, got but curt and rude replies to such letters as he found himself obliged to address to the Bulgarian plenipotentiary. Hessaptchieff told me himself three days before the declaration of war that he did not in any way consider the Grecian Army except as being beneath contempt, and letters which I have seen to Prince Nicholas show that in his correspondence he ignored the first precepts of good manners. As time wore on, military incidents between the outposts of the two armies occurred: the

Bulgarians, whilst refusing to parley with Greece, did not hesitate to rush her sentries and her outposts from time to time, wherever the strategical or tactical position of the Greek troops gave food for inquietude to the Bulgarian local commanders.

The position of the Greek Army during the months of April, May and June was somewhat unusual, their outposts stretching as they did over an extremely wide front—from Elephteri skirting the northern slopes of the Pangheon Mountain, cutting south of Serres, and then due west, passing half-way between Salonika and Kilgis; they met the extreme right of the Serbian Army at Ghevgheli upon the Vardar River. Upon this front during those months the Greeks had gradually managed to pile up six divisions, one division of which was required to garrison Salonika and to keep a watchful eye upon the Bulgarian garrison there, and upon the innumerable intrigues of the Bulgarian secret agents and comitadjis. In the Pangheon region from Elephteri to Nigrita—a distance of at least thirty miles, and intersected by the lake and marsh-land of Achena—the Greeks had but one division, but behind them was the sea of which they had absolute command. The question for the Greek commander, speaking purely from a military point of view, was whether he could find sufficient troops to reinforce this absurdly sparse garrison to bring it up to the strength of, say two and a half divisions, or whether he would abandon the Pangheon region altogether and give over a Greek country to the tender mercies of a vengeful foe masquerading as an ally.

The Bulgarian situation must also have caused considerable anxiety to those who watched over the destinies of the Bulgarian Army. The majority of their troops were being brought westward from Adrianople and Chatalja, but on the other hand peace with Turkey had not been concluded, and the Bulgarians naturally feared to rob their left hand of its strength to support their right. As peace with Turkey grew gradually more certain, the flow of Bulgarian troops westwards grew obviously greater; but to counteract this Greece was straining her utmost to withdraw every available man from Epirus and the Albanian border, and all her recruits

and reservists from Athens, to strengthen her divisions in Macedonia.

It was under such circumstances that these various military incidents, of which in England one heard little and thought perhaps still less, occurred; it would serve no good purpose to recapitulate here the outpost skirmishes, the treacherous movements of battalions, and even of brigades, but this is certain—that Bulgaria was playing a double and a treacherous game. Wherever these secret attacks were defeated by the Greek soldiers on the spot, the Bulgarian governor immediately begged the pardon of the Government at Athens, and said that the local military commander had made a fool of himself, which in most instances was actually true. The release of Bulgarian prisoners was requested and acceded to, and the hatchet was buried once more. But whenever the Bulgarian troops succeeded in ousting the Greeks from a coveted hill, or strategical line, the Sofia Government became suddenly paralytic; correspondence on the subject took weeks to answer, all kinds of excuses were invented to account for the delay, and meanwhile the Bulgarians held the captured positions and smiled inwardly.

The last of these incidents occurred on the Anghista River in the Pangheon region, about May 20th: here the Greek troops consisted of six battalions of the 7th Division, a division which had earned the nickname of "The Smokeless," because until that date they had never been in action. The Bulgarians had massed some 30,000 men, and at dawn they rushed the Greek outposts and hurled themselves upon the surprised defenders. Smarting no less under the gibes of their own compatriots than under the chatterings of their allies, the "smokeless" division turned at bay and rendered a right good account of itself. True, they were forced to give up a strip of country which was of vast strategical importance to the Bulgarians, because from the original Greek positions the railway line which formed the sole means of supply of the Bulgarian army between Adrianople and Serres, could have been brought under artillery fire. But the 7th Division fought well, and at least half the Pangheon Mountain remained to them.

Seventeen Greek prisoners who fell into Bulgarian hands were paraded through the streets of Serres with their hands tied behind their backs, whilst the Bulgarian soldiery spat upon them and struck them, and later, when this amusement failed, cut off their ears and noses. Two of them are said to have died of the treatment they received. Hessaptchieff energetically denied these facts to me ; and I told him that, being a neutral, it would be delightfully simple to prove that the Bulgarian was a humane captor and that the Greek was a liar ; all that was necessary was that he should furnish me with the necessary pass to proceed to Serres and to see and to converse with the prisoners myself. He made a great show of acceding to my request, and pretended to send telegrams to General Ivanoff, the Bulgarian commander. As a matter of fact I happened to know that the pretended telegrams were never sent, for the Bulgarian private line to Serres was permanently tapped by the Greek authorities. It was evident that the Special Correspondent of the *Daily Telegraph* was not wanted as a guest at Serres to verify the allegations of the Greek Headquarters staff anent the atrocities perpetrated upon the Greek prisoners.

It is perhaps worth while to consider for a moment the mental attitude of Greece at this period. There were not wanting politicians and others who thought that Monsieur Venezelos, the Premier, was lacking in firmness ; they would have liked to have seen the Greek arms claim a hasty revenge for these treacheries. It was said that the Premier was weak ; it was also said, and perhaps with some degree of reason, that if Greece had to fight Bulgaria, it was better for her to do so at once, whilst the Bulgarian armies on the frontier were yet few, and unstrengthened by the troops daily arriving from Adrianople and Chatalja.

I do not pretend to know the reasons that influenced Venezelos at this critical moment, but knowing King Constantine as I do, I feel sure that the Greek Premier must have found it a difficult task to restrain the royal commander-in-chief from marching his armies upon the Bulgarian line. However counsels of peace prevailed, and the incident passed—an incident, by the way, in which

the Greeks had close upon 1,000 casualties, and the Bulgarians, so far as I can ascertain, dropped 1,800 men. If the military situation was strained, the civil position was little better : day by day an ever-growing stream of Greek and Turkish refugees from the country occupied by Bulgarian troops streamed southward to seek the shelter of the Greek Army. I know that the inhabitants of Salonika alone sheltered some 40,000 of these refugees, and I have no reason to doubt that the official estimate of 100,000 refugees in all is true ; and when it is remembered that the Bulgarians put every conceivable obstacle in the path of the intending emigrant, the significance of such a comparatively large total will not escape the notice of the student of modern history. To put it simply, life for the alien under Bulgarian rule was impossible. The Bulgarian made his language obligatory ; petty annoyances were multiplied upon a background of real hardships and oppression, even retail massacres were not wanting, and the Bulgarians expended their worst venom upon the representatives of the Greek Church and upon the Greek educational authorities. I have heard from English and American employees of the various tobacco companies at Cavalla how onerous were the conditions of life under Bulgarian rule : trade of any sort was absolutely impossible, except of course for a few imported Bulgarian men of business ; and even domestic life was not only threatened, but in many cases destroyed, by the lust of Bulgarian soldiery.

During the month of May Bulgaria played a new card : first of all she pretended to accede to the desire of the Powers and to consent to a conference, concerning a settlement of the Serbo-Bulgarian treaty. Just when it seemed that a probable understanding was in sight, it was heard with horror in the European capitals, and with a cynical smile in the Balkan capitals, that Bulgaria was in the throes of a ministerial crisis, and therefore for some days would be unable to continue the negotiations for the proposed conference at St. Petersburg. Europe, taking her cue from Vienna, was most sympathetic over the woes of the Bulgarian Cabinet. Chancellors wept, and continued to hope for the best ; meanwhile the Bulgarian wire-pullers chuckled in their sleeves and hastened

by every means in their power the transfer of their army westwards. It was calculated that by July 1st the Bulgarian concentration would be completed, and before the Bulgarian Premier stepped into the train at Sofia which was to conduct him to the peace-giving conference at St. Petersburg, he had countersigned the operation orders of the Bulgarian generalissimo which ordered a general advance of the Bulgarian armies upon July 2nd. Unfortunately for Bulgaria these orders were issued to the G.O.C.'s division on June 28th, and some of them were so anxious to get to business that they commenced their attack upon the 29th—expecting that the same old story would be told if they were unsuccessful, and that they would reap much *kudos* if they happened to be victorious.

In the Pangheon region a strong Bulgarian column attacked the whole of the Greek line, which fell back before it according to previous orders. In the eastern centre, at Nigritta, the Bulgarians advanced in force, driving back a weak Greek detachment a matter of twenty miles; whilst at Ghevgheli, where the Greek and Serbian armies met, another strong Bulgarian column took and occupied the town, thereby not only cutting the railway but severing communications between the two armies; also along the Serbian front several attacks were delivered by the headstrong Bulgarian commanders. We, who were at Salonika at the time, wondered what Greece would do. Would she take these fresh insults lying down, as she had taken the others, for fear of raising the wrath of the Great Powers? or would she make up her mind to offer battle, or perhaps even to re-take the captured positions? The King himself was absent at Athens; he had gone there to bid good-bye to the Queen, who was about to start on a visit to her brother, the Kaiser.

News of the fresh hostilities brought him back in hot haste to Salonika. He at once placed himself at the head of his army and fell upon the Bulgarians. His first care was to clear the town of Salonika of the Bulgarian garrison; but this is a subject which at least deserves a fresh chapter.

CHAPTER II

THE BATTLE OF THE STREETS OF SALONIKA

THE morning of Monday, June 30th, 1913, found the city of Salonika more moved than it had been for many a month—even in its own recent chaotic history. News of the Bulgarian aggressions at various points along the front of the Allies had come to hand; the citizens of all nationalities, and speaking all the languages of East and West, gathered in anxious groups in the bazaars and along the streets that lead down to the quay. Here and there some of the Bulgarian soldiers were noticed going about their daily duties, and the eyes of the inhabitants followed them as they went, noting that, no matter what his duty, every man was fully armed. The members of that splendid force the Cretan Gendarmerie were obviously more on the *qui vive* than usual; every now and again they challenged civilians, asking them questions with a view of finding out if perchance they were Bulgarian secret agents. It is of interest to remember that during the three previous days no less than 280 civilians had been caught carrying bombs or explosives. Nobody knew at what hour the smouldering volcano would burst into flame. All the Jew merchants closed up their shops, and barricading their doors anxiously watched the streets through the slats of closed window-shutters.

At 11 o'clock came the news that the Greek Army had received orders to march forward, and constantly throughout the day the boom of cannon to the north was borne to the startled townsmen's ears by the hot Vardar wind. In the Boulevard Hammidieh, which is the Whitehall of Salonika, sentries, Greek, Serbian and Bulgarian, stood outside the barracks and offices of their

respective nations. Here were the Greek Headquarters Staff offices, where the King when at Salonika spent most of his time, and where four days previously a tunnel culminating in a mine filled with Bulgarian explosives had been discovered.

Next door were the offices of the Greek Commandant of the town, still higher up were the Headquarters of the Bulgarian military Commandant, and higher still three or four large houses in which Bulgarian troops were quartered, interspersed with houses occupied by Greek soldiery, and faced again by other houses occupied by Greeks.

At the top of the boulevard was the Serbian Consulate, facing the Bulgarian Post Office; and still farther two fine buildings, originally Turkish schools and hospital, which had been turned into Bulgarian barracks. At the bottom of the street was the White Tower, a sort of enlarged edition of our own martello towers at home, from the upper battlement of which two indiscreet machine guns poked their noses. The atmosphere in the Boulevard Hammidieh was electrical, nobody doing any work; people who had business there hastened their steps, the rest of the inhabitants carefully avoiding the vicinity. On the many balconies of the Greek Headquarters, staff officers were clustered together, and heavy patrols of Cretan Gendarmerie passed slowly up and down the deserted tramway lines. The members of the Foreign Press had established themselves in the courtyard of a little Turkish café opposite the Greek Headquarters, and there we waited events.

At 4.30 the Greeks sent an ultimatum to the officer commanding the Bulgarian battalion, giving him an hour in which to lay down their arms and proceed to the station, where a special train would conduct them to Serres—the Bulgarian Headquarters. Earlier in the morning General Hessaptchieff with two staff officers had left by train, although the Greeks would have liked to have detained him as a prisoner, in view of the intimate knowledge he possessed of the dispositions of the Greek forces. They gave him the benefit of the doubt, as he persisted in stating that his position at Greek Army

Headquarters was rather of a diplomatic than of a military nature. Speculation was rife as to whether the Bulgarians would accept the terms of their proposed surrender, and towards 5.30 there were few of us who were not standing watch in hand with one eye cocked upon the machine guns on the White Tower. A bare minute before the half-hour the French Consul at Salonika, who had always been suspected of Bulgarian tendencies, drove up to the Greek Headquarters and begged Colonel Douzmany to give an extension of one hour, during which he, the French Consul, would use his best endeavours to persuade the Bulgarian officers that resistance was useless.

The well-meaning representations of the Consul were unavailing; it was well after 6.30 when he returned to tell Colonel Douzmany that he had failed, and yet for a few minutes time dragged heavily; then a staff officer, followed by six Cretan gendarmes, marched out into the centre of the road, and halting in front of the Bulgarian guard he stood forward and summoned the inmates to surrender. Immediately the Bulgarian sentries and guard turned about, and doubling into the entrance slammed the door; the sound of bars falling into their locks could be heard through the intense silence of that minute's suspense; then, all of a sudden, commenced the most infernal noise that it has ever been my fortune to listen to: from every window, from every cellar grating, from half the housetops, and from all the corners, machine guns innumerable and a couple of thousand rifles belched nickel upon the boulevard; from the flag paving-stones a heavy dust of chipped granite rose; overhead the tramway wires fell as they were cut by the hail of lead; telegraph, telephone, and electric light wires fell jangling into dozens of inextricable tangles; plaster, tiles and splintered glass fell wholesale into the streets; every now and again a somewhat louder explosion overawed this inferno of musketry—it was the bursting of the bombs thrown by the Bulgarian soldiery from roof-top and from window. The air was literally thick with bullets, that sang and pinged as they flew past one's ears. It was indeed "hell let loose"—for thirty minutes the din was incessant; then a bugle

blew the cease-fire, and the silence became almost oppressive.

Yet once more a parley party halted in front of the Bulgarian barrack, and again summoned them to surrender ; a curt refusal was given, and the ear-splitting din broke forth afresh. This time, however, it was punctuated by the deeper note of a field gun, which the Greeks had placed on the lawn-tennis court ; this gun was firing at some thirty yards range against the Bulgarian house in front ; two or three times a minute it hurled a percussion shell upon the doomed building ; the crash of the detonating gun was almost drowned in the immediate crash of the bursting shell ; whole sections of wall were seen to disappear amidst clouds of the thick dust of disintegrated plaster. It could not last long—a few minutes were sufficient to decide the Bulgarians. Surrender was inevitable ; and as the bugles blew the cease-fire the splintered door of the Bulgarian house was thrown down, and there filed out the remnants of the garrison, about a score of men, but not a single officer ; these latter had disguised themselves in women's clothing and had effected their escape through the Greek lines at the commencement of the bombardment. Most of them were captured during the evening, but two of them managed to evade detection for two or three days. It is difficult to imagine the feelings of these officers, as in their improvised costumes, with a two-days' growth of beard upon their chins, they were led down to the transport which was to conduct them to Athens. But the contempt of the Bulgarian soldiery for the officers who had deserted them in their hour of danger was even greater than the contempt of the Greeks for men who had used Greek chivalry as a means of effecting a dishonourable flight.

It was not only in the Boulevard Hammidieh, however, that the battle of the streets was being waged, for in no less than eighteen separate buildings scattered broadcast through the town the Bulgarians were putting up the best defence they could. They had been told by General Hessaptchieff that within nine hours of the outbreak of hostilities the Bulgarian Army would enter and occupy Salonika ; misled by these fair words the

misguided soldiers thought that if they could only hold out a little longer there would be no cause for them to surrender at all.

In some places the fight was hotter than in others ; and thus the night of June 30th-July 1st wore on, to the incessant din of musketry and the churning crackle of machine guns, punctuated by the boom of the deeper-throated artillery fire. There was no one in the streets save gendarmerie and soldiers—except here and there a newspaper correspondent hurrying on his way, either to get a close view of the fighting, or to win to the telegraph office to send off his story. Every now and again down the street would come a little posse of Bulgarian civilians, caught red-handed in some act of violence, or a section of Bulgarian soldiery who had lain down their arms. As the dawn broke on July 1st the last Bulgarian post had surrendered, and by nine o'clock all prisoners were sent aboard the transports in the harbour, and the town of Salonika had assumed its usual aspect.

The tally of that night's work was 1,256 Bulgarian soldiers taken prisoners, 51 killed, and 13 wounded ; 11 Greek soldiers and 6 gendarmes killed, and 4 officers and 3 soldiers wounded. The official statistics of comitadjis were not published, but I have reason to believe that some 13 met death, whilst about 640 were made prisoners.

Amongst the tales of individual heroism which those wild ten hours furnished, I think that the tale of the Sergeant-Major of Gendarmerie stands out pre-eminent. Accompanied only by two of his men, he strode up the garden of the Austrian Consulate, from the protected windows of which some sixteen rifle-barrels were pointed at him. Loudly he summoned them to surrender, and gave them a minute in which to do it ; calmly and collectedly he ticked off each period of five seconds, in a loud voice ; when he had reached the fiftieth second he told them that they only had ten more seconds to live ; and they, as they looked down upon him, answered that he had but nine ; he replied that this made no matter, for the mine was set and the fuse would be lit without his help, and added that there only remained three seconds in which to make up their minds. His

determined attitude decided the garrison, who laid down their arms, and as the three gendarmes collected these they explained to the shamefaced soldiery that not only were there neither mines nor fuse, but they themselves had omitted to draw ball ammunition. The Bulgarians did not have a monopoly of bluff.

CHAPTER III

THE BATTLES OF KILKIS AND LACHANAS ¹

IT was at 4 p.m. on July 1st that the Greek 2nd Division, which had been garrisoning Salonika, marched out of the town on its way to the front, having effectually assured the tranquillity of the city; it was raining as the men passed through the streets, but they were singing cheerfully a little song in which the Dephthera Mirarkhia (2nd Division) was given credit for some of the many deeds of valour which it had actually performed. The townspeople, Jews and Mahommedans, vied with the Greek citizens in wishing the troops God-speed. The march of the 2nd Division during the first twelve days of this campaign is likely to become a matter of historic interest to military students; but it will suffice to say for the present that during the next fifty-four hours they marched eighty miles, during fifty miles of which they were fighting for every yard of the way.

The Greek forces were distributed as follows: in the eastern section, on our extreme right, the 7th Division had been driven back out of the Pangheon region and from Nigritta, but were preparing to assume the offensive. In the centre the 1st and 6th Divisions were moving forward on Lachanas; against these three Divisions, numbering in all some 35,000 men, the Bulgarians had their 4th Division—40,000 strong, under General Ivanoff, with headquarters at Serres; and on the lines of communication between this latter place and Drama and Cavalla, they had some 8 to 10,000 "mixed pickles." The Greek main army, consisting from right to left of the 4th Division, 5th and 2nd Divisions, were marching upon Kilkis, with General Headquarters at Baldja. On the extreme left the 3rd Division was coming up from

¹ See General Map, Part 2, in pocket at back of book.

Epirus, with the newly-constituted 10th Division in front of it; their line of march was directed along the Vardar towards Ghevgheli. The Greek 8th Division had not yet been brought from Epirus, and the 9th Division remained in Epirus throughout the war, protecting the Albanian frontier. The Bulgarians had fortified Kilkis and garrisoned it with their 3rd Division, whilst along the railway line between Kilkis and Doyran they were detrainng their 14th Division, brought in hot haste from Chatalja and Adrianople. (*Note*.—A Bulgarian Division consists of about 40,000 men.)

It was at dawn on July 2nd that the Greek advance commenced in earnest. The Bulgarians had massed their troops along the neutral zone, and their artillery had taken ranges to a nicety; in fact the whole flat country over which the Greek infantry swept was carefully marked out by range-marks at every 100 yards. According to the rules of the game the Greek artillery should have come into action and engaged the enemy's guns until they had beaten down their fire, but King Constantine preferred to keep to the tactics of General French in his famous ride towards Kimberley. The infantry were told to go forward at the same time that the artillery shelled the Bulgarian gunners; they swept forward in waves at 500 yards interval. It could not be said that the men advanced at the double, because it would be a physical impossibility for men loaded with a Greek kit to run for 500 yards, but they certainly swept forward at their best pace, paying not the slightest heed to the extremely heavy casualties they suffered.

As the Greeks advanced in bounds of some 500 yards at a time, the Bulgarians retired accordingly, and thus all through the day of July 2nd the running fight continued—30,000 men driving 40,000 in front of them. The spirit and morale of the Greek soldiery was excellent; there was no thought of food or for safety, and the only words that were heard during the long scorching day was the continual cry for water, from the men who were still in the ranks, and occasionally a cry for more ammunition; the wounded who fell, however grave their injuries, however great their suffering, did not only refrain from asking for water, but surrendered

their water-bottles and their ammunition-pouches willingly and gladly, to the men who were still untouched and able to continue fighting. Apparently the one idea of every man in the Greek Army was to do his best to assure the success of the Greek arms, without any regard to his own personal sufferings or condition. Such being the spirit of the men, eventual success was a foregone conclusion, and although the battle of Kilkis took some two days and nights to fight, the result was never in doubt. The Greek infantry swept forward continuously, victorious all along the line, whilst their most excellent artillery advanced from position to position, heavily peppering the enemy and supporting their own infantry, wherever and whenever their help was most needed.

By nightfall on the evening of the 2nd the Greek Army had fought its way over some sixteen miles of country, and was within three miles of the Bulgarian position which had been prepared along the line of Kilkis. The fight had been of the most sanguinary character, and the casualties on both sides were extremely heavy. On the left the 10th Division, advancing along the Vardar, had pushed the Bulgarians back; at one time along the marshes the men were moving through water for an hour and a half waist-deep under a galling shrapnel fire.

As the men fell it was impossible to say whether they were the victims of a shrapnel bullet, or whether they had stumbled into a deep place and drowned; here, however, there were no Greek wounded—those who fell never rose again, the remainder moved forward steadily, but slowly, singing their mournful poetic songs. It was a strange picture; one could have understood entire silence there, one could have understood martial, roystering songs, but those melancholy lyrics so beloved by the Greek, chanted to the mournful music which is his national idea of melody, created a weird impression upon the mind of the beholder, as the Bulgarian shells rained bullets upon the struggling soldiery and foetid waters of the marsh-land.

The following day, July 3rd, the battle of Kilkis proper commenced; it was a question of turning the Bulgarians out of their entrenched positions, whilst the 10th and 3rd Greek Divisions made a flank movement round the

Bulgarian right. The Divisions in the centre made the Kilkis lines their immediate objective; the Greek artillery in the centre made excellent practice, and rained shell and shrapnel upon the Bulgarian positions around and in the town itself. Such houses as the Bulgarians did not destroy themselves soon took fire from the Greek shells. To-day there are but three houses remaining in the town of Kilkis. So far as I have been able to ascertain, the Bulgarian 14th Division had reached Kilkis about dawn on July 3rd, and with this it was anticipated that they would make at least a strong opposition to the Greek advance, even if they did not dare to assume the offensive themselves. But the dash of the Greek infantry upset all calculations: in spite of repeated local counter-attacks, and one concerted counter-offensive, the Greeks occupied the Bulgarian trenches ere darkness supervened, whilst on the left the 10th and 3rd Divisions completed their enveloping movement, and at the same time driving the Bulgarians out of Ghevgheli, re-established touch between the left of the Greek and the right of the Serbian armies.

During the course of the battle a Greek lieutenant, a sergeant, and fourteen men, who had taken part in a charge that failed, found themselves wounded and prisoners, and at the mercy of the Bulgarians. Half an hour later, when a fresh Greek charge cleared the Bulgarians out of their trench, these men were found horribly and disgustingly mutilated, but ere they died they told their comrades what they had suffered at the hands of their captors. Such a tale coming in the middle of a battle from men whose mutilations were only too sadly visible, spoken to comrades, and in some instances to brothers and near relations, spoken by men who were dying and whose death could only be a matter of a few painful minutes, created a fury of rage which it would need the pen of a Zola to describe. The Greek soldiers, officers and men alike, were no longer human beings—they were mad, furious beasts of prey, longing with an intense craving for revenge, for justice, and for blood atonement. Men literally gnashed their teeth and raved, shrieking their curses and their hatred, and when again the order came to advance it was more like the

starting pistol at some great International Marathon race. The determination and lust for slaughter simply shone on their faces, and men, however severely wounded, continued to rush forward so long as they retained the use of their legs; those who were wounded in the feet or legs and could no longer go forward sat upon the ground and cursed wildly their luck, and urged their comrades to greater speed. It was the general rule to see wounded men strip off their ammunition-pouches and their water-bottles and hand these to the first of their comrades who came along. Considering the torrid heat in which this battle was fought, it is hard to imagine any more unselfish action than that of a wounded man giving his remaining drops of precious water, in order to enable one of his comrades to fight more adequately, quite irrespective of his own sufferings and devouring thirst.

To describe the battle in detail would be impossible until the reports of the comparatively few surviving officers commanding battalions come to hand; but, so far as I was able to see myself and to gather in conversation upon the battle-field immediately afterwards, and at a later day at some other halting-place, the Greek attack was one long sweeping line stretching over a fifteen-mile front. Here and there the waves of this advancing tide shattered themselves in vain against some rock of Bulgarian entrenchment, but when local supports or detachments from the general reserve were brought to bear upon these Bulgarian islands, the final attack invariably succeeded.

At one point in the centre of the line, on the evening of the second day, the Bulgarians made a counter-attack upon the 2nd Division with about 10,000 of the fresh troops of their own 14th Division, who had detrained during the day. The Greek soldiery were resting—most of them lying down dog-tired and asleep at the time; they had been fighting at Salonika, and then marched on to the battle-field, and had been fighting ever since. Few of them had slept for seventy-two hours, and I do not think that any of them had eaten anything but some bread during that period, and during the last twenty-four hours they had certainly had neither bread nor sleep, and painfully little water. The sun had vied with

the fighting, and had been excruciatingly hot; the Greek attack, delivered an hour before, had failed to reach the Bulgarian entrenchments, and the weary soldiery had lain down and gone to sleep immediately the moment the order had been given to cease pushing forward. It was, so far as I can remember, about 5.30 that the Bulgarians were seen to be rising from their trenches at an average distance of 350 yards away; from where we lay, such of us as were awake hastily kicked life into the sleeping men; rifles were grasped, and again the deadly hail of nickel was poured out from the Mannlichers.

The Bulgarian attack came on in a half-hearted way, and as the sleepy eyes of the Greeks gradually became accustomed to the fierce glow of the sinking sun, they began to shoot better, and to reassume something of their old alertness; for 150 yards or so the Bulgarian line came on practically unchecked. It was then the Greeks warmed to their work: the next hundred yards' progress cost the enemy dearly—they were seen to waver in their advance; occasionally isolated individuals rushed forward only to fall again, whether killed or only frightened who shall say? For ten minutes there was no movement on either side, then the Bulgarians *en masse* made one supreme effort and dashed forward; the Greeks fired steadily, and the click of bayonets going home may have warned the Bulgarians of what was coming. Suffice it to say they had no stomach to continue. Whole sections and companies ceased their advance and began to break to the rear; then went up the cry "They run, they run!", and without further word of command the Greek bayonets bristled into a hedge and swept forward; then at least there was no doubt about it, the Bulgarians ran in dead earnest; but they are heavy men and slow runners, and the Greeks exacted a heavy toll for their broken slumbers. It was about this moment that the Bulgarian artillery, placed actually in and around the town of Kilkis, commenced to fire heavily upon our troops; the Greek artillery, from every point within range took up the challenge, and soon the houses, dry as tinder, began to take fire. Amidst the flames and the bursting shells the Bulgarian gunners

could be seen rushing about trying to get their guns out of action, and then merciful night fell upon two worn-out armies. Next morning it was found that Kilkis had been abandoned, and that the Bulgarians were falling back northward towards Doyran and Strumitza.

Before leaving, however, they had completed the destruction of the town; to-day there are but three roofs amidst all that mass of cinders and fallen masonry. Of inhabitants, there are none; of the 7,000 original inhabitants, many had fled during the Bulgarian occupation in the spring and early summer. Most of the remainder had made good their escape the moment hostilities commenced; but some three or four hundred corpses of villagers of both sexes and of all ages testified to the fact that the Bulgarians, thwarted of their desire to take vengeance on the Greek Army, had consoled themselves for their defeat by slaughtering such of the townsfolk as they could lay hands upon.

The Battle of Kilkis was the first and perhaps the bloodiest battle of the war, and doubtless it would have lasted yet another day had not the 10th and 3rd Divisions completed their march, which brought them in a position to threaten the Bulgarian line of retreat.

The 10th and 3rd Divisions had not been very heavily engaged along the line of the Vardar and in their march to Ghevgheli, but they lost some 600 to 800 men, *hors de combat*, during their three days' fighting. The Greek 2nd, 4th, and 5th Divisions—35,000 men in all—bore the brunt of the battle, and suffered accordingly; they left about 5,000 to 6,000 of their bravest upon the field of battle. The Bulgarians, who had for the most part fought over known ranges, and retired from trench to trench, had about the same number of casualties, and left eighteen field-guns in the hands of the victors.

During the next three days the victorious Greek army fought two smaller actions against the rear-guard of the retiring Bulgar forces; the advance from Kilkis to Doyran was practically one continuous battle; and again in the Strumitza Pass, half-way between Strumitza and Doyran, the Bulgarians turned at bay. In these actions the Greeks did not lose very heavily, but the Bulgarians did; they also left many guns and prisoners

in the hands of their pursuers. But the main importance of these three actions, Kilkis, Doyran and Strumitza, which have been inaccurately spoken of as one great battle—namely, Kilkis—lies in the moral effect it had upon both armies, and upon the immense strategical result it had upon the Bulgarian Army who were holding the Serbians at bay around Istib; this force, roughly estimated at 60,000 men, had successfully held the Serbians at arm's length for five days, and had covered the retreat of the Bulgarian Army on their right, who had been beaten on the Zletovo River and at Kotchana.

This Bulgarian Army at Istib now saw their line of retreat down the Strumitza valley threatened by the unexpected Greek advance upon Strumitza. In haste and panic they broke up and retired down the Strumitza valley with almost incredible speed—the proofs of which I will describe in a future chapter.

I will now turn to the Greek right centre: the 1st and 6th Divisions, which had been ordered to march on Lachanas commenced their operations at the same time as the Greek main army moved upon Kilkis; they found the Bulgarians heavily entrenched, along a low ridge in the centre of which is the town of Lachanas itself. I cannot describe this action in detail, as it will be seen that I was with the main army at this moment; but I went over the ground two days after the Bulgarians had retreated, and there the tale was plainly to be read in the lines of empty trenches, the piles of empty cartridge-cases, three battalions of men busy burying the dead; and also from the mouths of the many Greek wounded I was able to gather an idea of the battle. Here it was very much the same thing as at Kilkis: there was the same impetuous advance of the Greek soldiery, the same excellent artillery practice by their gunners, and eventually the final bloodthirsty bayonet charges which captured such of the Bulgarian guns as had not been taken away.

One little incident which came to my direct notice will give the reader some idea of the spirit with which the Greek soldiers fought. I was riding along the extreme north-western section of the ridge, which had formed the Bulgarian right; here, pointing north, north-

west, west and south-west, was a group of captured cannon; the space to the east was occupied by two mounds of newly-turned earth; one was of considerable extent, the other was small and surmounted by two crosses of deal-wood, the cross-pieces tied to the uprights with a section of bandage. About this latter grave was clustered a little group of soldiery with their heads uncovered, whilst on the ground knelt a private in Evzone uniform; I thought that here were probably buried two Greek senior officers, and expecting to learn of the death of some personal friend, I inquired; the soldier who had been kneeling rose and himself told me the story.

It appears that there were three brothers, all in the same battalion, and during one of the Greek attacks one of these brothers fell wounded in the Bulgarian trench, which was some 400 yards down on the lap of the range of hills. When the next Greek effort carried the trench, there the two brothers found the mutilated body of their brother; his injuries were too horrible to describe, and he prayed to be put out of his misery. Such things are done in war-time, and his wish was fulfilled; but the two brothers swore a mighty oath that they would have revenge. Fifty yards up the hill a second line of Bulgarian trenches were still holding out; the Greeks made a wild attack upon them, but the attack was driven back—not so the two brothers who, breasting the line together, rushed wildly up the hillside to where the Bulgarian guns were pouring shell and shrapnel upon the battle-field in general. Presumably the Bulgarian infantry behind them were too much occupied with their immediate enemies to pay any attention to these two men who had broken through their line; the gunners were too intent upon serving their pieces, and the two brothers came upon them unawares. There, with their bayonets, they took an immortal revenge. The artilleryman is practically unarmed, and no less than thirty-seven of them were killed outright on the spot before some Bulgarian officer found his revolver and shot the two avengers.

Ten minutes later the Greeks took the position and the guns in their last final charge, and there they found

thirty-seven corpses and some fifteen wounded Bulgarians, and the remains of the two gallant brothers; the former were interred in the big mound, the latter were given special burial under the little heap beneath the two wooden crosses.

The man who told the tale told it with tears in his eyes, but a tremor of fierce pride in his voice; when he had finished, he said, "I, sir, am the fourth brother!" Such a tale brought home to one the nature of the fighting which took place about Lachanas.

Another anecdote of the fight was told me by the Turkish mayor of the village, in whose house I lodged that night. He had been a great sufferer during the Bulgarian occupation; his crops had been cut and his cattle and live stock had been taken, and it was only by the utmost cunning that he had been able to preserve the honour of his harem. On the second day of the battle, about half an hour before the final Greek assault, the Bulgarian general had him dragged out from his house and brought before him; he was given the option of finding £150 in gold or of being mutilated. With difficulty he managed to collect the sum named and brought it to the Bulgarian commander, who counted it into two equal piles: the one he placed in his own haversack, the other he distributed amongst his staff-officers; he then gave the order for the Turk to be mutilated and killed so that he should not remain as a witness; but the Turk could not be found—he had hidden in the hollow of a tree only some ten yards away, where he was found by the Greeks when they took the position.

I doubt if, save perhaps on the road from Larissa or from Moscow, there was ever such a rout of broken soldiery as fled along the road from Lachanas to Serres, after the battle. About 1,500 yards from the Bulgarian positions we found six gun-carriages and two cannon, all in perfect condition, abandoned; twenty yards farther on a score or two of carts, another twenty yards a dozen or so cases of ammunition, and so on along the road for ten miles, nothing but abandoned carts, abandoned cases of gun and rifle ammunition, abandoned rifles, arms, equipment. The ground was literally thick

with cast-off Bulgarian uniforms, and every fifty yards or so one came across a blackened Bulgarian corpse. One, indeed, was sitting in such a lifelike attitude that at first I thought he was alive; he was sitting cross-legged upon the road holding a broken rifle on his knees, and his head was slightly bowed; it was only when I saw the swollen and blackened flesh that I realised the man had been some four days dead. It was evident to anybody who rode over this stretch of highway that the Bulgarian retreat must have been of the wildest description. Every soldier in charge of a beast of burden or horse hastened to jettison his load to make good his own escape upon the animal's back.

I must admit, however, that it is difficult to account for the huge number of abandoned uniforms, unless it is that the Bulgarian soldiers hoped to escape recognition and to pose as Turkish peasants, in their flight. About 3,000 Bulgarians from the left wing lost direction, and for thirty-six hours were wandering hopelessly about the mountains, some dying from exhaustion and hunger, others coming in and surrendering, whilst the remainder had to be rounded up by the Greek troops, who in all took some 2,500 prisoners; but it is curious to remark that for the space of six hours on the second day after the battle, the road was so encumbered with dead and wounded Bulgarians that the Greek line of communication was cut, and a mounted gendarme, whom I sent back with a message to my paper, was obliged to avoid the road in order to save time, and to escape a probable stray shot or two. Correct figures are not available at the present moment, but I estimate the Battle of Lachanas must have cost the Bulgarians some 5,000 killed and wounded, 4,000 prisoners, and 10 guns, whilst the Greeks lost anywhere between 1,500 and 2,500.

CHAPTER IV

NIGRITTA—THE BLACK CITY

AT midnight Thursday-Friday, I had just turned into bed at Salonika after a long day watching the battle of Kilkis. I was dog-tired. I had arranged with Mr. Franz de Jessen, the well-known international military correspondent, that he and I were to chum together and to start next morning at five o'clock on horseback for the front.

I was awakened by an imperious knock at the door, and a corporal told me that he had a telegram for me from the King. In somewhat scanty apparel, and thinking that he had probably exaggerated his business in order to get a rapid interview, I jumped out of bed and opened the door. There was no doubt about it—the telegram came from King Constantine at Baldja, directed to the Officer Commanding Lines of Communication: "Ask Captain Trapmann to proceed immediately to Nigritta and verify the fact that 1,500 villagers have been massacred there and the whole town destroyed. Give him every facility he may require." I asked "When am I expected to start?" The corporal replied, "As soon as you are ready." I said, "In five minutes I will be there; if you have not got a horse, go and get one." I then went and invaded De Jessen's room at the hotel.

I was divided in my mind between loyalty to an agreeable companion and a half promise made, and loyalty to my paper with a desire to get a "scoop"; but I am ashamed to say that personal considerations won the day—a fact which I shall never regret, because not only do I believe that I have made a lifelong friend in Mr. de Jessen, but I know that I have secured as a witness

to the Nigritta atrocities a journalist of international reputation, whose word must carry weight.

De Jessen asked for ten minutes in which to shed his pyjamas and don his riding kit, and soon after we were both in the hall of the hotel waiting for the corporal, who was to act as our guide and interpreter. We managed to materialise our horses, but the corporal was less lucky. In spite of the fact that he rode on His Majesty's business, it took him the best part of four hours to secure a horse, and the dawn was already painting the eastern skies a ruddy purple when our little cavalcade set forth, at 4 a.m. We had before us a somewhat stupendous task; from Salonika to Nigritta as the crow flies there are about a hundred miles, and our great ambition was to arrive before the corpses of the victims had been committed to the earth. The first twenty miles was all easy going along a good macadamised road, but afterwards our route lay through precipitous mountain tracks, along which one could at the best proceed at walking pace, as often as not dismounted.

Our corporal escort—M. de Messenesi—a banker by profession, was not by any means a good horseman by choice: as De Jessen said, "Vous êtes très bon banquier, mais très mauvais chevalier." He was a sixteen-stone man, unaccustomed to the hardships of campaigning, and he carried a little cushion with him which he placed on the saddle to ease the stress of ups and downs. It required a chair to enable him to mount, and anything in the line of a jest produced a weird gurgling noise, a gurgling which totally incapacitated him for the time being. Tamely he trotted along behind us at his best speed, uttering sighs and groans; and truth to tell he afforded us a great deal of amusement, and to use military parlance he certainly improved our "morale," for we thought how much better stayers we were than he—like the Pharisee of old; now and again he would produce excellent reasons why we should take a few hours' halt or rest, but whichever of us was feeling the more energetic at the moment would promptly wither his excuses, and assist him into his saddle.

It must be admitted, even for men fit as we were (I had been campaigning for eight months and De Jessen

had just come from a hard two months' tour through Albania on behalf of the *Morning Post*), it was rough experience: from 4 a.m. on the Friday until 3.30 Friday afternoon we only dismounted once, save where the road was too difficult for our beasts to carry us. At that hour we reached the village, or township, of Sohos, of some 7,000 inhabitants. We noticed the vast majority of the inhabitants seemed to be standing at the doors of their houses ready to close them at a moment's notice. Our khaki appearance seemed to reassure them, and before we had reached the centre of the township we had two or three hundred people running beside us, stretching to touch our stirrups and wishing us all sorts of pleasant things, both in this life and hereafter.

We were led to the house of the village priest, and here we found the city fathers in solemn conclave discussing a situation of which they knew little. It appeared that early that morning a dozen or so comitadjis had invaded one of the outskirts of the town, had pillaged the houses and threatened to return largely reinforced to sack the town and massacre the inhabitants. These urgently prayed for our advice; the Greek uniform worn by our corporal was the first they had seen for many months. They wanted to know what was the general situation, and whether it would be wiser for them and their women and children to evacuate the town and go into hiding. We told them what we knew of the victories of Kilkis and Lachanas, and they replied by quoting local incidents of fellow townsmen and townswomen murdered and mutilated. We told them that of course if they wanted to behave like sheep, the Bulgarians, if there were any in the district, would only be too delighted to act the butcher; but in view of the recent Greek victories, if they would only act the part of the man and show some resistance they would probably be able to save not only their wives and families, but their houses as well. I asked the village fathers if they had any arms, and I elicited the fact that there were a couple of hundred rifles hidden away under the church, but the men did not dare arm themselves with these for fear that if they were caught with arms in their hands, by the Bulgarians, they would suffer some peculiarly nasty

death. I pointed out to them that in any case they would be likely to die, and that as dying was a short process, the nature of their death was practically immaterial so far as they themselves were concerned, the main thing being their wives and families. If they made some resistance, this would give time to their families to save themselves.

My words carried weight, and when we volunteered to inspect their antediluvian weapons and organise a sort of town guard, their gratitude was unmistakable. They were also most anxious that we should not continue our journey. It must be remembered that we were pressing at our best speed forward to obey the orders, not only of a commander-in-chief, but of the King, to say nothing of attempting to provide a scoop for our respective newspapers; the worries and troubles of a wayside township could not, so far as we were concerned, be allowed to interfere with these two all-important duties. De M. explained at length the dangers of proceeding and of falling into an ambushade of comitadjis, whilst the priest appealed to us to tarry with him and his flock throughout the night, and evolve some semblance of military discipline and tactical protection from the impromptu army which had been collected.

I think De M. was extremely weary, and that the inadequacy of his cushion helped to exaggerate his fears of an ambushade; De Jessen, who was perhaps not quite so fit as myself, lent a lenient ear to these counsels; and the priest, ably assisted by the timorous villagers, sounded a Greek chorus of appeal. Personally I was adamant: I had scheduled myself to reach Nigritta by sunset, and, to put it mildly, I did not care a damn for anything between me and my destination. After expressing these views somewhat energetically in four different languages, we managed to get a move on us; the inhabitants, armed with gas-pipes and various other lethal weapons, had insisted on furnishing us with a sort of guard of honour to see us through the dangerous zone. We, being in a hurry to get away, left De M. to take command of this awkward squad and to follow us, and De Jessen and myself got to saddle and moved forwards. Just as we were going off two Greek officers, accom-

panied by three soldiers, arrived upon the scene and started to reopen the whole matter. Personally, I had made up my mind and was thoroughly sick of the subject, and De Jessen felt much the same way. We told the officers to talk it over with the corporal, and to do whatever they pleased, while we trotted along.

We had reached the confines of the township, myself riding some twenty yards ahead, keeping a wary lookout for possible ambushes and other nastinesses, when suddenly at the bottom of a courtyard, to the left through a doorway, I spied a portion of a Bulgarian cap. Mistrusting my own eyesight, I called back to De Jessen in English, "Look well into the doorway on your left that you are about to pass, and see if you do not notice a Bulgarian soldier." He answered, "You are quite right," and kicking my feet out of my stirrups I drove my horse and his into a neighbouring courtyard, and ran back with De Jessen to take charge of events. Bang opposite the doorway in question we found a small boy, who volunteered the information that not only was there a Bulgarian soldier in the house in question, but at least two comitadjis as well. We sent him back to the priest's house with a message, telling our reinforcements to come up and support us.

In the meanwhile we took such steps as seemed good to us at the time, and which I do not propose to detail; and the end of the story is, that our little tea-party, consisting of two Greek officers, ten town-guardsmen, one obese corporal, and two enthusiastic journalists, mounted guard over three prisoners, to wit one Bulgarian soldier and two comitadjis, all three of whom were in the last stages of physical and moral fear of what particular atrocity was to be practised upon them. When they found that they were the first to get a drink of water amongst the whole outfit, I think they realised that their immediate death and mutilation did not form part of the programme of the evening's amusement; and I, personally, saw them tucked up for the night amidst a heap of straw, a potful of rice and mutton, and as much water as it was good for them to drink under the circumstances.

But the clock having moved along (it was now 6 p.m.),

and although the inhabitants were tremendously "bucked" at the idea of three prisoners, and apparently greatly honoured by the presence of two war correspondents, they were greatly opposed to our making a fresh start, and they were also horribly afraid that reprisals might be made. It was really much too late to continue our journey over the terrible mountain passes to Nigritta, with any hope of arriving there at a reasonable hour, even provided we were not attacked upon the way; and to tell the truth we were very tired, ourselves; the alluring prospect held forth by the priest of chicken, rice and wine, and a good night's rest, proved too much for us. We spent a few hours in organising a town guard, drilling them and placing them in positions where they might be of some use (and actually were), and then, dog-tired, we rolled up on the balcony of the priest's house and slept for a few hours. Next morning we started at daybreak, promising when we reached the 7th Division to ask the general to send at least a company to occupy the townlet, and protect it against Bulgarian casual soldiery and comitadjis.

Although it proved uneventful, the first twenty miles were somewhat nerve-racking, for our self-constituted escort of ten men were continually seeing visions and dreaming dreams. At first we went to some trouble to make tactical dispositions, giving our commands in an alien language, but eventually we got more foolhardy, and thought it better to take risks than to waste valuable time. About nine o'clock we fetched up at Soulebo—a place where a battle had been fought the previous day—and for the next ten miles we followed the course of the battle. Soulebo was the southernmost point reached by the Bulgarians during their dash forward. Here the Greek detachment from Nigritta, falling back in front of 8,000 Bulgarians, had been reinforced and assumed the counter-offensive. Save for the pitter-patter of rifle-bullets and the crash of artillery, the picture was exactly the same as during the battle. It was easy to trace the various points of resistance—the places where the Greeks had charged, and where the Bulgarians had made a stand; and the whole atmosphere reeked, as all battle-fields do in a hot climate, of putrefying human and animal flesh.

At Soulebo we came in touch with a patrol of the Greek Army, and the officer commanding the rear-guard, dismissing at our request the Sohos volunteers, furnished us with half a dozen cavalrymen on horses, capable of raising a trot. Thenceforward over a terribly difficult country we pushed on with our escort at a rapid pace, until towards noon we crested the ridge of hills on the northern face of which Nigritta is built. I do not think I shall ever forget my first sight of Nigritta. Imagine a fertile hill-slope clothed in fig, olive, vine, and mulberry, in the midst of which once stood a prosperous township of 8,000 souls. When I first saw it, the vine, the olive and the fig trees were all withered with the scorching heat of incendiary flame. Of the township of 8,000 souls there remained absolutely nothing but a stenching heap of shattered masonry, charred roof-trees and incinerated human remains. The sight was horrid enough, and over all swayed the thick dust of cholera and typhus. It seemed that the god of war had selected this pleasant spot of trees and shadow to make an example.

As we rode amongst the shattered walls and occasionally towering chimney-pots, we espied here and there peasants searching amongst the reeking ruins for remnants of their loved ones; not a soul greeted us as our horses picked their way amongst the ruined debris and jangling telegraph wires. It was the very incarnation of war. As our nostrils inflated at the reeking stench of burning human flesh, so also were our throats choked with the poisonous dust and our ears made victims of the howls of masterless dogs and motherless children. It was my first sight of the real horrors of war. A charging line of bayonets may move one to enthusiasm, the thundering of hoofs of a cavalry charge may awaken one to patriotism and a desire for glory; but Nigritta, with its smouldering ruins, its murdered population, its grief-stricken searchers for the corpses of the loved ones, seems to me to be the very worst embodiment of the god of war.

We made our way, De Jessen and myself, towards the gendarmerie post; here we were greeted by Sergeant Venezelos, the son of the Premier, who had been instructed telegraphically to act as our interpreter, if necessary, and

to show us the gruesome sights of the place. He is a nice boy, and did what he could for us, which consisted in finding us some bread, three cigarettes—over the third of which De Jessen and I nearly spoilt our promising friendship—one liqueur glass full of the most vile brandy, and a promise of more bread next day. It may not sound the height of luxury to the casual reader in his armchair in London, but the cigarettes at least were extremely welcome to us, who had been without puff or pull for thirty-six hours. They were, in the words of the old story, "little but good."

Presently the captain of gendarmerie came on the scene, and asked us how we proposed to verify the atrocities which had been committed. He had received telegraphic instructions from the King to do anything which I required, and to place himself entirely at my disposal; he suggested that we might like to interview one of the very few remaining survivors of the catastrophe. The sun was very hot, the stench was horrid in our nostrils, and the appalling yowl of deserted dogs obsessed our ears. The comfort of a temporarily satisfied stomach and the pleasant solace of one cigarette each, combined with our intense weariness, rendered us lazy. We excused ourselves for the time being from looking upon the horrid sight of disinterred corpses; we excused ourselves from rummaging amongst the hot rubble of burnt houses for possible skeletons, and with one voice we asked him to produce the witness of whom he spoke. He was brought before us—a tall straight-looking fellow and straight-spoken, leaning heavily upon a stick, and with him came the mayor and one or two friends.

We decided between us that the best thing to do would be to ask him to tell what he had to say without questions or interruption. I, myself, understand Greek sufficiently well to have an effective check upon any interpreter, the which part was acted by our corporal banker friend and young Venezelos. Phrase by phrase they translated the story that he told. Before he commenced his tale, I leant forward and whispered to the mayor, "Are the words which this man may speak likely to be true?"—I must have spoken too loudly, for he overheard me, and

raising his hand solemnly above his head, he said, "At this moment I know not where my children are; may God Almighty kill them if I speak a word which is not true." I do not think that I can do better than repeat, in his own simple words, the tale as it was told to me by Georgios Vlahos, standing there on the balcony of the one undamaged house in Nigritta, amidst the smoking ruins of 1,500 homesteads.

"I was," he said, "one of the last to leave the town; I carried a few household articles upon my donkey. It was Monday evening, and the sun was setting as I started forth. I had gone perhaps two kilometres when I overtook a boy whom I knew by sight, but whose name I do not know, aged thirteen years. Together we jogged along for a few minutes, for he too had a donkey, when in the path we were suddenly stopped by Bulgarian soldiers; roughly they ordered us to give up our donkeys and to turn back, and though we hastened to comply with their orders they struck us with the butt ends of their rifles. We were marched back to the house formerly occupied by the Greek police at Nigritta. Here we were thrown into a room where we found already another boy, aged eleven—the son of a neighbour of mine.

"From sunset Monday until Thursday morning our door was never opened, and we remained without food or water through those long weary hours. On Wednesday, about the middle of the day, looking through the window which commanded a view of the market square, I saw the Bulgarian soldiers and officers clustered around the Central Café; several barrels of wine had been tapped and the soldiers were drinking freely; the officers had bottles set upon the table. Busy preparations were being made to burn down the mayor's house; I saw soldiers hurrying hither and thither with bundles of straw and tins of paraffin, under the direction of officers in uniform, and when at last fire was set, the Bulgarian officers lifted their glasses on high and drank a toast to the glorious Bulgarian army. The soldiers, who were, I think, a little drunk by now, cheered loudly, and then the heat of the flames drove everybody from the market place.

"On Thursday morning, it must have been about day-

break, the door of our room was opened, and a Bulgarian officer, with a pistol in his hand, came in and closed the door behind him. He ordered us to stand up, and then asked us each how much money we had. I gave him 12 francs, the elder lad 6 francs, and the younger 2 fr. 50 c. He put the money in his trouser pocket and went out, closing the door behind him. I heard him walk down the corridor, and when he reached the entrance next door to our window he said to the three sentries on duty, 'Shoot those men for me.' I myself crouched close to the window, and immediately heard the sound of three rifles firing into our small room. The elder boy was killed outright, the second one was shot through the stomach, and I dragged him to safety beside me and told him to be quite silent.

"It might have been a minute or two after that the door opened and the three Bulgarians came in; two of them were carrying a tin of petroleum; the other was carrying his rifle with the bayonet fixed. When he saw that we were still alive, he came at us, and at the first thrust killed my companion; I lay on my back, and parrying the thrusts as best I could with my feet, I tried to save myself. Three times he wounded me in the legs. Here! and here! and here! (and Vlahos displayed to us the flesh wounds upon his legs). I was very hungry and thirsty, and I think that I must have lost much blood; anyway I fainted, and perhaps it is to this fact that I must attribute my safety. Perhaps the Bulgarian soldier thought that he had killed me; I came to my senses with an intolerable feeling of heat, and looking down I noticed that my right leg was on fire. The corpse of the boy beside me was blazing brightly; the door was open—perhaps to create a draught; there was a strong smell of petroleum in the room. In great fright I extinguished the flames on my right leg with my hands. See the blisters! (and here Vlahos displayed his crimson and tortured hands to our gaze). Then jumping to my feet I raced for the door. As I rushed through the passage, my eye was caught by some rifles standing in a rack, left by the Greek police; I seized one with a vague idea that at least now I could sell my life dearly; I forgot that I had no ammunition. As I dashed along the

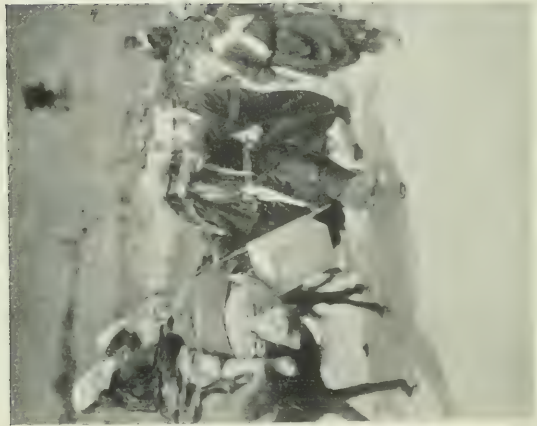
corridor and across the courtyard at the back, I escaped notice; the whole place was ablaze, the straw soaked in petroleum had been strewn everywhere. I rushed into the stables at the back, and up the steps into the loft, thinking that here even with only a clubbed rifle I could make some show of resistance, but I was not pursued.

“ Amongst the slats of the roof I found a narrow aperture through which I could look out upon the town, and upon the burning building of my late prison, twenty yards away. For some hours, I suppose it must have been, I stood there and looked: the prison fire burnt bright, and then died down to a heap of embers; then, I suppose it must have been towards midday, fire after fire burst forth in various parts of the town. The Bulgarian soldiers were martialled into columns and moved northwards through the streets; each time that they passed a burning building they cheered loudly, and often I could see men, women, and children stretching their hands from the upper windows crying to be saved from behind their locked doors; and the Bulgarian soldiers appeared to me to mock them as they marched away. I shall never forget that half-hour: the flames spread all around until presently there was not a house which was not ablaze; and there were few houses from which the cries of terrified inmates did not come.

“ As I watched the conflagration, things grew worse; presently things exploded—I do not know what they were. (*Author's Note.*—The Bulgarians had placed charges of gunpowder inside the various houses, many of which, being tamped, exploded and blew the walls outwards.) I fear that I must have lost my head; all around me houses seemed to be blown into pieces, walls rocked and fell with a terrible crash, and the flames reached twenty or thirty metres up to heaven; I feared that the end of the world had come; I think I must have been demented or dreaming. The next thing I know I found myself rushing downstairs and into the courtyard, crowded with Bulgarian soldiery; I dashed through them, and at my haste they drew aside; I ran on for a distance of fifty yards, and then slid down into the watercourse of the river; I crossed this, and scaled



THE SOLE SURVIVOR OF NIGRITTA,
GIORGIOS VLACHOS,



TURKISH HAREM IN THE KRESNA PASS
SEEKING PROTECTION BEHIND THE
GREEK LINES.



TURKISH VILLAGERS VOLUNTEER TO CARRY
GREEK WOUNDED. SEMITLI, JULY 1913.

the opposite bank, I do not know how!—fired at the while by many Bulgarians. Four of them especially chased me, but in my madness I had left my rifle behind ; I do not know how I did it, but I scaled the precipitous cliff of the ravine, which the four Bulgarians who followed me were not agile enough to climb. I ran on, I do not know whither ; bullets sang around me, I cared not ! I was mad !

“ Up hill, bleeding from my wounds, faint, and I think almost dying, I still ran on, until I reached the summit of the ridge ; then, looking before me across the narrow valley, a few hundred yards away, I saw the most glorious sight that has ever gladdened my eyes. It was the advance-guard of the Greek Army. I do not know what came over me—my heart seemed to rise into my head, and such manliness as I had left forsook me—I only know that I knelt down, and lifting my hands to Almighty God, I broke into a hysterical fit of weeping ; then I fainted. When I came-to, officers of our glorious King were bending over me and ministering to my wants.”

It was thus that Vlahos told his tale to us, and I do not take shame to myself that a lump was in my throat as he finished. Neither De Jessen nor myself found any words to say ; a desire for empty places was upon us, and for a few minutes we strode up and down the rotten woodwork of the crumbling verandah. The rest of those who had listened to the tale were sitting in characteristic attitudes : the captain of gendarmerie was biting his moustache and trying to assume an intense interest in the woodwork of the roof ; young Venezelos was busy with an imaginary manicure ; our banker-corporal had developed a bad cold ; the mayor was sobbing frankly, for he too had suffered, his wife and children having been burnt in that awful holocaust ; Vlahos alone appeared unmoved. When I felt sufficiently master of my own voice I went towards him, and taking his hand, I told him that that night I should write the tale as he had told it to me, and that within a few hours the whole of Europe would read the story and bear him the sympathy of a civilised people. He asked me if he might then go to search for his wife and children, and as he went down-

stairs the mayor told me, in answer to my questioning glance, that they were mercifully safe. The wife, it is true, had been violated in front of her father, by half a company of Bulgarians, but the two children had escaped and hidden themselves in a baker's oven, where their mother had joined them, and thus escaped the inevitable death which would have been her portion. We did not like to think upon that meeting between husband and wife, and to change the tenor of our thoughts we went out to try to verify the alleged massacres, and to thoroughly investigate all the points in the tale told us by Vlahos. I do not wish to go into details—I can only say that we conscientiously did our duty; we took the standpoint that the story told to us would not be believed by Europe.

We visited the prison; we found the ruins, we found the burnt skeletons of the two boys, we found the bullet-holes in the wall opposite the window, where the three Bulgarian sentinels had fired upon the inmates; we found the crevice in the slats of the roof of the stable from which Vlahos had watched the burning of his native town; we traced the blood-tracks of his flight; we marvelled at the thirty-foot precipice which he had scaled in his extremity; we even found in the gravel wall the places where his nails had scored their mark; we found a score of places where bullets aimed at him had pitted the wall of the miniature precipice; we traced his subsequent flight; we found the place where for the second time he had fainted, and there we found some blood-soiled bandages. We did not think that further confirmation of his graphic story could be required. From feelings of delicacy we refrained from seeking his family; and even from a journalistic point of view I do not think that either of us regret that we did not pester this ill-used man to that extent.

It was then our duty to endeavour to verify the figures which had been given us as to the number of victims who had met their death at Nigritta. The mayor furnished us with a list of 470 human beings whom he knew to have perished; there were, moreover, some 300 of whom the fate was doubtful. There had been 1,450 houses in the town, and selecting four houses at random

we rummaged amongst the debris. In all we found the charred remains of 13 human corpses. Night was falling, and we were sick of our task; a simple mathematical sum told us that if we accepted the official figures we should not be overstating the case. We were invited, nay, pressed, to continue our search through the night in that stenching shambles, but neither De Jessen nor myself had the stomach for any more. We had a long night's work in front of us; we had all this story to write to our papers; we were both absolutely convinced that in the main the facts were as represented, and so we shirked the revolting task of searching for charred skeletons, and sat us down upon the verandah with paper and fountain pen, in the light of one guttering candle, to tell Europe what we had seen. Late into the night our pens scratched across the paper, to the mournful accompaniment of innumerable dogs, who, standing amidst the still hot and smoking ruins, howled dismally a death dirge for those who would never return. It was a ghastly night in every sense of the word; the whole place stank; we ourselves were unwashed, unfed, and terribly weary—it was only by kicking and pinching each other that we could remain awake and keep our pens going; and when at last at two o'clock we lurched, hungry, thirsty, and dead weary, to seek our blankets, we felt that we had earned our rest. But such was not to be our portion; I had not been lying down a minute when a new enemy commenced his attack.

The place was crawling with bugs; I had an electric torch, and I caught and counted twenty-one victims before I gave up all ideas of slumber. De Jessen was scratching and grunting in a state of semi-unconsciousness. For half an hour we tried the alternative of lying downstairs in the muddy courtyard, but even there we found no peace; and subsequently, filling a tub with water, we undressed carefully, and washed ourselves moderately clean; then calling together our staff (and even they, Greek and Turk alike, were complaining of an unnatural itch), we saddled up our horses and set forth upon our journey. For forty-eight hours we had had practically nothing to eat, no sleep whatever, but very little water, and a totally inadequate supply of that

great solacer—tobacco! The hours between midnight and sunrise are seldom gay, save in great cities where lights shine and music throbs, but I doubt if I shall ever pass hours more miserable than those I spent before the dawn came at Nigritta, on Sunday, July 7th, 1913.

CHAPTER V

THE AFTERMATH OF GREAT BATTLES

FROM Nigritta we made the best of our way to the Headquarters of the 7th Division, which were established at Sakafcha, some two miles distant from the main road Salonika-Lachanas-Serres, and three miles distant from the river Struma where it runs into the lake of Achenas. Headquarters had only been established there a matter of a few hours, and as we made our way over the marshland, we rode to the sound of guns firing upon the Bulgarians in front of Serres, some ten miles northwards of us. To reach the headquarters of General Sotilis was like reaching home, for though I had never met him before he welcomed me with every courtesy, and offered me such humble necessities as lay within his power, and we were both very grateful for a plate of macaroni which we enjoyed in company with him and the officers of his staff. He sent out an officer of gendarmerie to procure us quarters in the little Turkish village and he gave us water and—priceless boon of all—two cigarettes apiece; and if it had not been for the uncertainty about our baggage, as we gazed at our clean blankets spread upon a clean floor we would not have changed our lots with that of King Constantine himself. After all, there is no feeling more satisfactory than when one's thirst is appeased, one's hunger turned, one's craving for nicotine temporarily satisfied; and to see a moderately soft place whereon to lie and sleep, when one is dead weary. We attempted sending off duplicate copies of our despatches, and the General very kindly sent a gendarme in quest of our baggage-animals; who, as I have narrated in a previous chapter, was obliged to take an indirect road in order to avoid the congestion of dead and wounded Bulgarians upon the main road.

I am ashamed to say how long we slept, but we were awakened by a staff-officer, who said that the division was about to move forward, not north-eastward towards Serres, as we had anticipated, but north-westward along the right bank of the Struma, to effect a junction with the 1st and 6th Divisions, and there to cross the Struma and march direct on Demir-Hissar. The General wished to know whether we would accompany him, and failing that if there was anything that he could do for us. After a hasty strategical study of the map, we decided that there would be no advantage in following the column, but we returned a very affirmative answer as to whether there was anything that he could do for us; we said that we were simply starving for tobacco, and would be grateful if he had such a thing as a cigarette amongst the commissariat of the 7th Division. After a short while the staff-officer returned to us apologetically, in one hand a Henry Clay cigar, in the other six somewhat attenuated cigarettes, and said that these were all the 7th Division could produce. I am afraid our bump of modesty was not very highly developed, whilst that of acquisitiveness was. We seized upon this convoy of tobacco as drowning men at a straw. Having offered our thanks and a more or less decent good-bye to the staff-officer, we started in to discuss the burning question as to who was to have the cigar and who the cigarettes. Now De Jessen is a man who is accustomed to do himself well, and to him the name of "Henry Clay" was that of a dear and esteemed friend. I admit that I myself may be gross in my desires, and at that moment, at any rate, quantity to me was of far more importance than quality. Six cigarettes spelt six smokes, but a Henry Clay only spelt half an hour's enjoyment. So to our mutual satisfaction I relinquished my claim on the cigar and hugged the cigarettes to my bosom.

It sounds very footling to sit here in London and write about these things, but the impression is still very vivid on my mind. De Jessen sat to windward and puffed that damned cigar in my face, until I threatened murder and various forms of unpleasant death, whilst with undisguised miserliness I offered two cigarettes upon the shrine of the goddess—Nicotine; as I crushed the

second stump into the earthen floor beside my blanket and turned over into a heavy sleep, I saw his cigar end burning opulently through the gloom of the Turkish chamber, and as I dropped off to sleep I reflected with some satisfaction that whilst I should have four cigarettes left for the morrow he would have nothing but a taste in his mouth and the stump of a burnt cigar. Imagine my disgust, when after breakfast I lit my third cigarette with some ostentation, to find my Danish companion bring forth, with chuckling glee, half a Henry Clay. He smoked that cigar on no less than four separate occasions, and as far as our tobacco supply was concerned it was a dead heat.

The soldier whom the General had sent to find our baggage, which was supposed to be at Lachanas, returned to say that he could find no trace thereof, and this gave us food for thought. The division had gone, and with it our last hopes of food or tobacco. News there was none, nor any likelihood of acquiring any worth sending, unless the army marched on Serres. The water in the village had been condemned as being impregnated with cholera, and so we had to consider our situation seriously. We eventually decided to ride to Lachanas ourselves, and it was whilst we picked our way along the corpse-strewn highway that we witnessed the scenes which I have described in a previous chapter (Chapter III). At Lachanas we eventually succeeded in gathering some information about our missing baggage: our men had been heard of that morning, and for some unknown reason had left for Kilkis, some forty miles distant westward by mountain paths. It was a bitter blow; we had violated the fundamental rule laid down to all war correspondents—never to separate ourselves from our luggage, and we were suffering the penalty of hunger, thirst, and smokelessness.

Next day it was a silent and lugubrious road to Kilkis; we began to see visions of ourselves chasing our baggage, as in a nightmare, all over Macedonia. It was stiflingly hot, and even the fact that the last five miles of our journey lay over the battlefield of Kilkis, with which I had had an intimate acquaintance a few days before, and which was still strewn with occasional corpses, failed to awaken us to any degree of enthusiasm. We were

ping for news for our papers, and, shame to say, we were pining even more for our baggage and some comfort for ourselves.

Our arrival at Kilkis was a bitter disappointment: we could find no trace of our baggage, and the town itself was nothing more nor less than one huge cinder. Only three houses remained intact—one occupied by the Greek staff-officers, and two tiny shops occupied respectively by a French and a British subject; of inhabitants there were none. By much careful questioning we elicited the fact that our baggage had returned to Salonika. Hungry, thirsty, and cursing without stint, we set forth southward. A war-correspondent without baggage—which, of course, means without food and tobacco—is like a ship without a rudder; and much against our will we went in search of our rudder, and when we found it next day at Salonika we forgot all the bitter remarks we had intended to address to it, and wept tears of joys individually and separately down the necks of those who were responsible for trotting it around Southern Macedonia. It was bad for discipline, perhaps, but it was a joyful sight to see our carefully purchased stores once again; and when one has been long hungry and long thirsty, and long pining for a smoke, and when one has recently satisfied all these wants, one is not inclined to be vindictive as regards the past, but rather to be extremely grateful as to the present. We contented ourselves with such luxuries as Salonika afforded, and dark and deep-dyed threats as regarded the future.

So far as I can trace in the columns of the *Daily Telegraph* I did not say much at the time about the sights we witnessed on our journey from Sakafcha to Salonika via Lachanas and Kilkis, because, as I have explained, our minds were occupied with things which then seemed far more important—water, cigarettes, and such like; but looking back, and consulting the pages of my diary, I find that there is much which deserves notice.

Of the two graves beside the cannon at Lachanas I have already spoken, and of Kilkis there is nothing to say save that the town presented the aspect of one gigantic cinder. But along the railway line from Kilkis station to Salonika there was much of human interest.

Outside Kilkis station the yard was filled with a huge pile of arms of every description, and of almost every century. Crusaders' weapons, heavily embossed, gas-pipes from Albania, Damascus and Constantinople, were inextricably mixed with Remingtons, Martini-Henrys and Mausers. I was invited to take my pick, and chose some dozen weapons which would have looked well as trophies in any feudal castle or East End antiquary's shop. Unfortunately these were not easy things to carry on horseback, so I left them in the care of the station-master, who next time I passed that way had been moved elsewhere, and with him had moved my little horde of trophies.

At Kilkis we got in touch with the Greek lines of communication, and then we became witnesses of sad and continual processions of Greek wounded, who were for ever passing rearwards. Since then I have met convoys of Greek wounded suffering far greater hardships than they suffered at that time upon the railway line. I have seen them, the more serious cases, riding upon baggage-animals drenched by semi-tropical downpour, or bleached by semi-tropical sun; the flies busy around their bandages in the most suggestive manner; the less serious cases went afoot, hopping along as best they could down the one main artery of communications from front to rear. When they could walk no farther they lay down by the roadside and slept; when there was no food they went hungry, and nine-tenths of the time they suffered from thirst.

But what impressed me most was the appalling silence of these victims of war as they moved southward: no matter what their means of conveyance, whether it were the gravely wounded being jolted in untold agonies upon the springless platforms of motor-lorries, or the less serious cases jolting along upon the pack saddles of baggage animals, or the comparatively lightly wounded walking towards the railway line, they one and all preserved a silence which was most oppressive. As they passed drafts of reservists and recruits going forward, there was no exchange of greeting; sometimes even when they recognised old friends or relations amongst the ranks, the greeting only consisted of the briefest words.

I tried my best to fathom the psychology of the wounded, for their attitude struck me as the most astonishing thing that I had come in contact with ; it is hard to find a word which describes this attitude—morose is perhaps the best word which I can think of, and yet there was nothing in the manner of the wounded which suggested a grudge against their officers, or any feeling of injustice suffered by the patients ; they were merely silent and self-contained ; their heads for the most part were bowed to hide such signs of physical suffering as they could not suppress ; their minds were too occupied with considering their personal woes to allow them to pay any attention to their surroundings.

From my own personal experiences I can say that the average Greek wounded soldier, on his way to seek medical comforts at the bases, did not exchange a sentence more than once in three hours, with his fellow sufferers or those whom he met on his way.

Those who have travelled much in foreign places are accustomed to see dumb animals suffer pain patiently, and it is only to such dumb animals that I can liken the Greek wounded ; one of my most vivid recollections of all this horrid war will ever be the stoicism and patience with which the Greek wounded supported their unchronicled sufferings. I have seen them arrive in little processions of twenty, fifty, or a hundred, at a medical camp ; I have watched the faces of those who seemed to me to be the most fatigued, the most expended, and I have anticipated that these would naturally be the first to clamour for water and for medical comforts. These anticipations of mine have ever proved wrong. Each man, no matter what his hurt, whether it were merely a mutilated extremity, such as a foot or hand, or whether it were some more mortal wound in lung or stomach, waited patiently his turn. There was never any pressing of wounded about the medical officer, nor any clamouring for early succour on the grounds of their more serious hurt. I do not know if the Greek is so constituted that he can bear pain and endure hardship better than we of the Northern races—if so, it is a priceless gift ; but if not, then I take off my hat to the Greek. I am familiar with the name "Spartan endurance," but I cannot

believe that such endurance was ever greater than that which I have seen displayed by the soldiers of modern Greece, both upon the battlefield and upon the lines of communication.

At Kilkis, for the first time during the Greco-Bulgarian campaign, my attention was called to the wounded; hitherto my lot had been to follow the firing line, and there the enthusiasm of victory is apt to make one forget those who follow behind. But at Kilkis station, the night that I took train, there were some 1,500 wounded waiting; their utmost hope being to find accommodation upon the springless floor of some coal or cattle truck. Our train had been announced to start at seven o'clock in the evening, but as a matter of fact it did not leave the station until well after 2 a.m. We spent the intervening hours, De Jessen and myself, ministering to the wants of these poor fellows as best we could. Of water there was none, for the only available well had been defiled by the Bulgarians throwing their cholera patients into it; but we did our best.

It is interesting to notice that very seldom from those whom we helped did we obtain a solitary word of thanks, nor from those whom we left neglected did we hear a single word of reproach. As I have said before, the psychology of the wounded Greek is incomprehensible; the one and only thing which moves him to enthusiasm is the possibility of getting his wound sufficiently healed to allow him to return to the front at the earliest possible occasion.

On our arrival at Salonika next morning we found half a dozen ladies waiting to do what they could for the wounded; but the methods of red tape are as obnoxious in Greece as in England; men, no matter what their hurt, were kept waiting for hours before they were allowed to leave the station and proceed to the hospital.

Once at Salonika, we found ourselves the centre of eager inquiries; so far we were the only correspondents who had gone to the front.

We had both given permission to the local papers to copy our dispatches into their editions, and in view of the meagre information which was leaking down officially through the Bureau de la Presse we were

looked upon as mines of information. At first we were vaguely flattered by these attentions on the part of acquaintances and strangers, but when it came to being besieged upon the steps of our hotel on the way up to our rooms by a crowd seven or eight deep, clamouring for the latest news from the front, we began to realise that "where ignorance is bliss it is folly to *seem* wise." By the time I reached the first floor, where my own room was, I had become curt, not to say rude, in my answers, for I was anxious to report myself safe and sound to my wife. We had to endure a similar reception at the Club : everybody we had ever met came and buttonholed us individually, and asked our opinions in detail upon every subject, from the tactical position of the last unit we had been with to the general political situation in Europe, inviting us to give our views on the strategy of King Constantine and the political capacity of M. Venezelos. It might have been a triumphal entry, but if such is triumph, we felt that we could well dispense with it. All we asked was peace, sleep, iced drinks, and something to smoke. It was a great contrast, those twenty-four hours I spent in Salonika after the hardships that I had endured at the front : those seeming conscious dreams of iced lemonade which had spoilt my wakening hours, and recalled a parching throat to endure another parching day, came true. The cigarettes of my imaginings materialised themselves, and food, good well-cooked food, was to be had for the asking. Nay! all these things, and much champagne, cigars and other wild luxuries, were thrust upon me ; and such is human nature that, after the first wetting of my palate, the first comforting of my appetite, I had but little use for the luxuries which twenty-four hours before I would have sold my soul to obtain.

During the few hours that I spent at Salonika this time, I found leisure to visit most of the great military hospitals which had been set a-going during the past week, and to visit also the hospital ship which was continually plying between Salonika and Piræus, ever overcrowded with wounded. I also saw some of the boats which were plying to Grecian ports, bearing a continuous stream of Bulgarian prisoners. Considering

how suddenly the blow of war had fallen, and remembering as I do the absolute inadequacy of hospital arrangements at the outbreak of the Turkish war, I cannot praise too highly the way the Greek authorities dealt with the problems which confronted them. At this moment there were no less than 7,000 Greek wounded at Salonika, and perhaps a similar number of Bulgarian prisoners, one-third of whom were also wounded and were being treated in the hospitals. Added to this there was anything between twenty and forty thousand refugee inhabitants—Greeks, Turks, and Jews from the districts where fighting was in progress—who had come into Salonika and claimed Greek hospitality, food and shelter.

When one remembers that Greece is not accounted a rich nation as we count wealth in Western Europe, when we remember that at least half of those who sought Greek protection had not the least claim upon Greek sympathies, and when we remember that every nerve and sinew of Greek resources were being strained to their utmost in order to fight the enemy which threatened to overwhelm the country, I do not think that I can be considered guilty of bias if I say that the Greek authorities who dealt with the Bulgarian wounded, the Bulgarian prisoners, and the refugees of all nations, not only performed their duty towards humanity, but performed it in a manner worthy of the highest praise.

We in England do not know what it is to fight for our very national existence, and I think that if ever the time came when we had to do so, when we had to strain every nerve to beat the enemy at our gates, we should look upon the sufferings of prisoners of war, and refugees, as purely secondary matters ; but it was not so with the Greek authorities—they did all in their power to lessen the sufferings of their prisoners, and all those who had sought the protection of the Greek flag.

I do not think that, according to the terms of the peace of Bukarest, the Greek Government will ever be indemnified for the moneys that they expended on this humanitarian task, and since the interest of Europe in Balkan affairs is practically dead, I doubt if ever the Greek Government will obtain sympathetic recompense for its sacrifices in this direction ; but I do insist that it should

be placed on record that little Greece, whilst struggling for its very existence, found time and money and men to look after all the homeless and hungry ones who sought refuge under the blue-and-white flag of King Constantine. I myself know how heavy a burden this was to the local authorities of Salonika, and knowing what I do, I state emphatically that civilisation and humanity owe a deep debt to the Greek Government, and to those who by private-subscription assisted in this work of mercy.

We ourselves, in England and America, waxed sentimentally mad over a thousand victims of the *Titanic* disaster. Our press shrieked volumes of heroics, and we have come to look upon the incident as one of the pages of glorious history in this century of our national existence; but tiny little Greece, with a population of rather less than a quarter of that of the Metropolitan area, succoured and supported the families and dependants of something like 50,000 victims, without going into any heroics, or even hardly mentioning the fact; from examples that I fathomed myself, I know that the experiences of these Macedonian victims were infinitely more thrilling and heroic than those of even the *Titanic* victims. It is perhaps purely a question of publicity and advertisement, but the Greek philanthropist has preferred to follow the precepts of the Bible and to do good by stealth. But he is not therefore less worthy of admiration.

CHAPTER VI

THE LULL BEFORE THE STORM

AFTER a few hours' rest, and having collected my baggage and my staff, I hastened back to the front again. Army Headquarters with the King were at Doyran, and it was for this spot that I made. The King had established himself at Doyran railway station, a delightfully pleasant spot beside the waters of a limpid lake, which forms an almost perfect circle, and whose waters, crystal clear, lap on the sands like those of an ideal seaside resort. The town itself, some five miles distant, is purely Turkish, and in aspect is white and Eastern.

I was welcomed at Headquarters and bidden to attach myself permanently thereto, but I felt that I should be doing better for myself and for my paper if I took a more independent course. First of all I spent a day in visiting the battlefields of Doyran and of Strumitza, where the Bulgarian rearguard, after the decisive defeat of Kilkis, had made a stand; there was nothing, so far as I could see or could gather from the accounts of eye-witnesses, to make these battles worthy of being chronicled by the historian; they were simply rearguard actions in which both sides lost some hundreds of men, and the Bulgarians a score of cannon and some two thousand prisoners.

Whilst I was at Doyran these prisoners were being marched in; quite a number of men in the ranks were Greeks from Bulgaria, who had been enlisted against their will, and I was a witness of one curious incident where a prisoner of war noticed his brother amongst a group of interested onlookers, and breaking the ranks fell upon his brother's neck, to the embarrassment of the latter and the amusement of his comrades.

Amongst one batch of some 600 prisoners there were seven Bulgarian officers, two of whom at least conversed fluently in French and German, and from these I was able to gather some ideas as regards the Bulgarian point of view. They had been taken prisoners with their companies in a manner they were absolutely at a loss to describe; they had been led to understand that everywhere the Bulgarian arms were successful, until, suddenly hopelessly surrounded, they found themselves summoned to surrender. Whilst I was talking, a Greek officer from the General Staff came up and asked a few pertinent questions; in reply to a query whether they had been well treated during their fifteen-mile march from Strumitza to Doyran, they replied that they had absolutely nothing to complain of, but on the contrary they had been treated far better than they had expected; their men had been given bread by the Greek soldiers before the Greek soldiers themselves had been fed, and they, the officers, had been given such luxuries as coffee and cigarettes, and had been treated with every respect due to their rank.

The type of the Bulgarian prisoners struck me, and De Jessen, who was with me, as being very low; even the officers were men whom one would not like to have trusted with a sixpence, and the men had jowls on them which betrayed a low human cast. There were quite a number of Mahommedan Turks in the ranks, who looked upon their captivity as a blessing in disguise. I spoke to several of them, and elicited the fact that they had been recently recruited, but since the date of joining their regiments they had been split up, one Turk being detailed to a squad composed of nine or ten Bulgarians, by whom he was treated as little better than a dog; he had to do all duties and fatigue work officially required, and besides he had to act as servant to his nine comrades in the squad, and when his energies flagged he was usually encouraged to more zeal with the business end of a bayonet. It was rather curious to find the attitude of these Turkish and Greek prisoners towards their captors; they were frankly delighted at being made prisoners of war, and there was nothing they were not anxious to do for the armed escort who accompanied

them. They did not attempt to induce the Greek authorities to set them free—they were quite content to remain prisoners of war and to salute and cheer every Greek officer who came within their range of vision. The real *pukkah* Bulgarians themselves took things philosophically and were certainly not ill-content with their lot.

Strumitza lies at the north-west angle of a right angle : toward the south a good road leads across the mountains toward Doyran ; to the east two indifferent roads nurse each side of the river Strumitza, along the valley to where that river effects its junction with the river Struma. The valley is perhaps some six miles wide, and is bordered on each side by rugged, precipitous mountains. It was along this valley that the Bulgarian army of Istib effected its flight, the signs of which were very obvious. No less than 4,000 carts had been abandoned by the Bulgarians in their flight, and every now and again the Greek pursuers picked up a field gun or two as they went along.

The mountains which form the southern boundary of the valley are extremely precipitous, rising to a height of some 6,000 feet ; but in their eagerness to catch up the fleeing columns the Greek infantry crossed these mountains, and on July 10th and 11th a curious state of affairs existed. The Greek infantry had passed where it was impossible for their artillery to follow, and they found themselves upon the flank of the Bulgarian retreat. True, they were totally unsupported and extremely weak in numbers, for there were only some 6,000 men of the 4th Division facing the flank of the army of Istib and the remnants of the 3rd and 14th Bulgarian Divisions—perhaps some 120,000 men in all, with artillery. It was General Moschopoulo, a typical fighting general, who commanded the Greeks ; he was burning with a desire to launch his infantry upon the flank of the Bulgarian army, and in vain he telegraphed for authorisation to undertake this risky enterprise : he was told not to commit himself, but to worry the enemy as much as possible. His columns coming down from the precipitous mountains denied the road on the southern bank of the Strumitza to the enemy, and he took under fire at distant ranges the columns of the enemy who were passing along

the northern bank of the river. Whether this fire inflicted serious losses upon the enemy is likely to remain a mystery, but there can be no doubt that it contributed considerably to the disorderliness of the enemy's retirement, and to saving the considerable town of Petrichi from being sacked and burnt by the Bulgarians.

Speaking from a purely military point of view, and with all due deference, I think that the Greek Headquarters Staff might have left the general a freer hand. It was inconceivable that a retreating army, however numerous, could waste time in bridging the river which separated it from its opponents; and even had the Bulgarians done so, and supported by their artillery driven back the infantry of the Greek 4th Division, these latter could have always extricated themselves by re-climbing the precipitous mountains which they had crossed. I am inclined to think that this was the one lost opportunity of an otherwise faultless campaign. Had Greek Headquarters given a free hand to the 4th Division to sacrifice itself to any extent to which it felt inclined, the Bulgarian retreat would have become, I believe, an absolute *sauve qui peut*; as it was, they left innumerable cannon, waggons, ammunition cases, and gear of all sorts, upon the line of their retreat, and they did not pause until they reached the river Struma, whence northwards their retreat through the narrow valley was assured.

Had the Greeks attacked fearlessly the flank of this retreating army, as was the desire of the general on the spot, they could not have possibly lost anything, and they might, had luck favoured them, have achieved a momentous victory, resulting in the capture of forty or fifty thousand men.

It is with all due deference to the great ability of King Constantine and to his Chief of Staff, General Douzmanis, that I put these views forward. There were perhaps factors of which I am unaware, which influenced them in their decision to refuse to allow a complete initiative to the 4th Division; but it will need very good reasons indeed to explain the retention of this division which was straining at the leash, more especially when it is remembered that the whole of the rest of the

Greek army was following in the rear of the Bulgarians. Whatever my criticism may be worth, the result of the operations along the Strumitza was inconclusive. The bulk of the Greek army reached Petritzi, near the banks of the Struma, on July 11th, and it was not until four days subsequently that the army again got in motion.

Meanwhile in what I have called the eastern theatre of operations the three Greek Divisions (1st, 6th and 7th) had made fairly good progress, though even these operations in the easy light of subsequent criticism, are not above reproach. It is so easy to be wise after the event, more especially when one is not responsible to anybody for the decisions one arrives at; but there was certainly some muddle as regards the movements of the 7th Division about the 6th and 7th of July. As will have been seen in a preceding chapter, I was myself at headquarters of this division on that date; so far as we knew, our outposts had pushed across the Struma, and our reconnoitring patrols had been within a few hundred yards of Serres itself. I even asked the general if he was not going to push out at least a regiment (four battalions) to take that town, which was purely Greek, and thereby not only protect the inhabitants, but sever the Bulgarian lines of communication by cutting their solitary railway line. I was told at the time that the engineers had not completed the bridge across the Struma, and that, although the river was fordable, he did not wish to endanger the health of his troops by wading the waist-deep waters, which were known to be badly infected with cholera germs.

On the afternoon of the 6th this division, leaving a detachment to watch the half-finished bridge across the Struma, and incidentally to guard its own right flank, was hastened fifteen miles north-west to form a junction with the 1st and 6th Divisions upon the banks of the Struma, opposite Demir-Hissar. The division marched in the afternoon, reached its destination by midnight, was told that it was not wanted, and countermarched the next morning; and it was not until a week afterwards that it crossed the Struma and marched on Serres—a distance of perhaps eight miles. That week was fraught with fate for the 40,000 Greek inhabitants of that town,

On the 6th General Ivanoff, the Bulgarian generalissimo, scared by the remnants of his defeated armies from Lahanas and Nigritta, jumped into his motor-car and raced northwards, abandoning the town.

The inhabitants formed a sort of armed town-guard of perhaps 1,200 men; but the Bulgarians, finding themselves free from pursuit, hung about the hills overlooking the town, and kept the town-guard busy for some days. Then at last, on the Thursday, seeing that the Greeks had not occupied the town, they returned, and defeating the militia, sacked the town, burnt it to the ground, and outraged the inhabitants in a way that I shall describe in a future chapter.

The 1st and 6th Divisions threw a bridge across the Struma and marched upon Demir-Hissar, where they defeated the Bulgarian rearguard and captured half a dozen cannon; the 1st Division, turning to the left, moved up the valley of the Struma until it got abreast of Petritzi. The 6th Division, moving north-eastwards through the valley, drove the Bulgarians before it. The 7th Division, eventually entering Serres, pursued such of the enemy as it found towards Nevrokop, where it found the enemy reinforced by troops from the lines of communication, and where it fought a victorious action against some 20,000 Bulgarians. Meanwhile the 8th Division, brought over from Epirus and strengthened by strong drafts of recruits and reservists from Athens, moved due eastward, both by sea and by land and along the littoral of the Ægean Sea—threatening Drama and Cavalla.

I have been led to understand that the Serbian Headquarters Staff complained somewhat bitterly about the selfishness of the Greek movements; they complained that the Greeks, instead of devoting their sole energies to wiping out the Bulgarian field forces, allowed themselves to be led away into a campaign of conquest toward Cavalla, Drama and Nevrokop. If there is any truth in this complaint from a purely military point of view, and I take leave to doubt it, the Greeks certainly had an excellent excuse for their action; from a purely political standpoint it was not so much commercial and intrinsic interest that they had to guard at Cavalla and Drama,

but they had to protect the Greek inhabitants of this region from the totally unforeseen danger of massacre. The inhabitants were absolutely at the mercy of the Bulgarians, and it was asking a little too much of Greek strategy to suggest that the Greeks should calmly allow these inhabitants to be massacred on wholesale lines, whilst they themselves had in the 8th Division some 20,000 men prepared to take and defend these places. The movement of the 7th Division against Nevrokop was a purely military one, and was entirely justified from a purely military point of view. The Greek army had to make sure of its right flank, the first natural resting-place of which was Nevrokop; and if the Serbians became a little impatient at what they were pleased to consider as the leisureliness of the Greek advance (I believe that they complained that during eight days the Greek army only marched twenty-seven miles up the Struma Valley), the Serbians must remember that this same army had marched during the previous ten days a matter of over 120 miles and fought the victorious battles of Kilkis, Lachanas, Doyran, and Strumitza, whilst the Serbians themselves had only during the same period marched nineteen miles, and beyond a desultory cannonade had indulged in no great action.

It must also be remembered that even the Greek army required a little breathing-space; within a week they had lost 10,000 men, or roughly 10 per cent. of their available army; they had in front of them an extremely rapid and difficult river to bridge, and to add to their difficulties, rain fell somewhat heavily, with the result that the Struma was in spate. The Bulgarians had destroyed every bridge; and besides, there is no use in disguising the fact that the Greek engineers were not numerous enough nor had they sufficient practical experience to deal with the problem before them.

The valley of the Struma afforded a very decent road leading northwards along its eastern bank, whilst along the western bank there was a workable track. I admit that I personally did not understand the reason of the Greek delay in its advance between July 11th and 16th. There was no good reason from a military point of view, so far as I could see, why the army should not take up

the pursuit and press northwards. Even if the engineers were unequal to the task of bridging the river at frequent intervals, it could be assumed the Bulgarian morale had been so shaken that an energetic pursuit, even though risky, would have afforded good results.

Doubtless King Constantine, who is the embodiment of energy himself, had good reasons for his delay, which he will make known in his own good time; but as a looker-on I admit that I fretted. The Bulgarians were given time to withdraw the main body up the Struma valley and to prepare positions on the Kresna Pass, and at Djumaia and Dubnitza, whilst they opposed a relatively weak rearguard to the Greek initiative. It is perhaps unfair to criticise a campaign when one does not know the ins and outs of all the details thereof, and the factors which influenced the General Staff. It was a well-known maxim of Napoleon's, that it is the general who makes the fewest mistakes who wins. It is admitted that every general, even Napoleon himself, is guilty of many errors; but until fresh light is thrown upon the subject, I cannot help thinking that the inactivity of the Greek army between July 12th and 20th was either an error of judgment on the part of the General Staff, or else a reproach to the Greek engineer service.

Such were my impressions at the time, and since then I have had no reason to correct them.



KILINDIR RAILWAY STATION: THE KING'S HEADQUARTERS
AND GENERAL STAFF



WHEN THE GREEKS PASSED VICTORIOUS THROUGH ELASSONA, A
TURKISH MUEZZIN CURSED THEM FROM THE MINARET.

Note the bullet-marks.

CHAPTER VII

THE ADVANCE UP THE STRUMA VALLEY

THE Bulgarians had very completely destroyed all the bridges over the river Struma, of which the most important was the iron bridge which carried the railway from Salonika to Constantinople. It must have taken them quite a lot of decision to destroy this bridge, for in it they destroyed their own last hope of ever again campaigning south of the affluence of the Strumitza and Struma rivers. The line is a single one, but the bridge itself is some 250 yards long, and spans the coffee-coloured waters of a river which runs over a sand and mud bottom at an average depth of from 4 to 8 ft. and with an average speed of some 6 knots an hour.

Greek Headquarters had been moved to Hadji-Bailik railway station, the next station to which, across the bridge, was Demir Hissar; the Bulgarians retired along both banks of the Struma, after fighting a sort of half-hearted action in the vicinity of Hadji-Bailik. The Greeks pressed on with their main army to the river bank, and immediately undertook the replacing of the one span of the bridge which had been blown up and had fallen into the river, whilst the Greek right wing, crossing the Struma twenty-five miles lower down on the pontoon bridge which they had made at Orliako, moved upon Demir-Hissar from the south, and there drove in the remnants of Ivanoff's army, from whom they captured several guns and not a few prisoners. In order to obviate the military difficulty of passing along the river Struma, it was imperative that the river should be bridged in several places, in order to afford liberty of action to the various divisions composing the Greek army. The material for these bridges was not to be obtained locally,

and practically every plank and stick of wood had to be brought from Salonika.

Thus it was that there was a lull in the operations, and until the whole of the Greek army could be brought into line there was no object to be attained in pushing forward any individual division along the main road, which for some fifty kilometres runs along the eastern bank of the Struma. At first the valley is very narrow, leaving barely room for the river and the road between the rugged mountains which rise up on either side thereof; but going northward the valley gradually widens out to a distance of perhaps two, or in places even three miles; the road along the eastern bank is distinctly good and is macadamised; the road along the western bank is in many places a mere pathway, and after running for ten miles northward practically ceases to exist altogether.

It was on July 13th that the Greek army, having thrown a trestle bridge for infantry and guns across the river some hundred yards below the still damaged railway bridge, commenced its march northward; the 7th Division, forming the extreme right of the Greek advance, moved *via* Demir-Hissar upon Nevrokop; along the main road moved the 1st Division, and between these two the 6th Division worked its way by devious mountain paths. On the western bank of the Struma the 2nd Division, with the 4th upon its left, moved northwards; whilst still farther to the left the 10th and 3rd Divisions completed the Greek line. The last-named division directed its march upon Pehtzevo, whilst the 5th Division, moving in rear of the 1st along the main road, formed the general reserve.

It was soon discovered that it was quite impossible to move field guns over any of the mountain tracks, and consequently during the 13th, 14th and 15th of July, the whole of the Greek field artillery was moving along the main road in the Struma valley. Here we had the unusual instance of an army some 120,000 men strong advancing over a front some sixty miles wide, with the whole of its artillery moving in one long column behind the centre.

On July 16th with the 1st Division we reached the remains of the village of Livonovo, some twenty miles

north of Demir-Hissar. This village will always remain in my memory as (always excepting Nigritta) the most God-forsaken spot in a God-forsaken land. In the campaign against the Turks the Bulgarians had burnt the greater part of the village and massacred most of the inhabitants, and it is a matter of personal regret that they didn't burn the remainder, for apparently the only living things saved from the conflagration were—bugs, and they selected the few remaining houses for their happy home, which for one unhappy night was my "resting" place.

The village is built upon a dust-heap, and faces south; the sun pours down upon it with a relentlessness unparalleled elsewhere. There is one small trickle of water dignified by the name of fountain, which is capable of filling one water-bottle in about three minutes. The nearest other water is a tricky liquid which at the time when we occupied the village oozed its way through a mixture of slime and decomposed corpses until some three miles away it fell into the dull brown waters of the unspeakable Struma. If there are any trees within a five-mile radius of Livonovo, I did not see them. We marched in, 12,000 thirsty men and perhaps 3,000 equally thirsty artillery horses and baggage animals; and the first sight which greeted our eyes was that of the corpses of six villagers lying in the dust opposite the fountain; it was a cheery welcome that, and Livonovo was a cheery spot. Although my orderly, for instance, was assisted by two gendarmes, detailed by the General to help him fight his way to fill my water-bottle, it took him exactly seven hours before he could get me a drink of water.

During that time I visited the sights of the place and tried to forget how thirsty I was. The sights consisted of a burnt church, a very perspiring staff, apparently the whole of the household utensils and wearing apparel of the village spread broadcast upon the few remaining balconies; and last, but by no means least, three barrels of nitro-glycerine, which was done up in neat little packets each weighing about 3 lbs. These barrels had been thoughtfully opened by the Bulgarians and presumably used for the commencement of a paper-chase. The Greek soldiers did not know what it was, and it took them

a long time to discover ; at first some genius found out that if he applied a match or cigarette end to one of the macaroni-like sticks which made up the bundles, the result was a sort of an electric firework. For half an hour these light-hearted soldiers beguiled their thirst by throwing these squibs about, until, scared for the safety of my horses, who by no means liked this form of firefly, I made representations to one of the staff-officers that it was a somewhat dangerous game to play. Together we made our way to where the explosive lay thickest, with a view to collecting the same and placing it out of danger ; but we were saved the trouble. One of the squibs got home into a cask which had only been partially emptied, and the emptying process which then ensued was immensely expedited. The identity of the soldier responsible for this little mishap was rather difficult to establish, as the only portion of him which was subsequently found consisted of the handle of his bayonet, which caught me in the abdomen ; but I must admit that we did not look very closely for other remnants.

It was a wearisome afternoon save for this little diversion, and it was uncommonly thirsty ; a few miles to the north the Bulgarians attempted to lighten our tedium by turning their guns upon our outposts, but even this failed to distract our thoughts from the fact that we were extremely thirsty. Towards evening a staff-officer came joyously to the house where De Jessen and I had installed ourselves, and gleefully invited us to dinner ! I admit that at first we did not jump at the invitation ; dinner without anything to drink whatever, and probably nothing to eat, seemed an overrated form of entertainment, more especially since we ourselves boasted a reserve of tinned food and my orderly had just returned with my water-bottle filled. However, it is bad form to refuse an invitation when one cannot think of a ready lie to excuse oneself, and we allowed ourselves to be led tamely away.

Imagine our vast surprise when we discovered all the other members of the staff grouped about a table set in the centre of the roadway lit by three candles stuck in the necks of bottles—*bona-fide* beer bottles, as I live ! And not only were there candles and empty bottles



THE KING'S "PALACE" AT LIVONOVO, JULY 1913.

on the table, but there was food!—macaroni and a savoury stew of rice—and oh! think of our joy, there was absolutely unlimited beer! The commissariat of Divisional Headquarters for the ensuing fortnight had arrived, and so far as the liquid portion thereof was concerned, we proceeded to consume it that night, in which task we were eminently successful. It was an orgy to dream about; but, unfortunately, the other inhabitants of our *maison de luxe* would not let us dream; they kept us scratching hour after hour until at last we left them in full possession of their haunt and went outside to sleep on the grass—or I should say withered weed stumps, which in this fair garden of Macedonia is just about all that the earth provides. Oh! decidedly Livonovo was a sweet spot; and the fact that by the treaty of Bukarest the Greeks have returned it to the Bulgarians need not cause any great heart-rendings; the only inhabitants who had not been massacred are the bugs, and doubtless as years roll on they will grow acclimatised and become good Bulgarian bugs. They are certainly, physically speaking, the best developed bugs that I have ever come across, or I should say, perhaps, that have ever caught me napping!

Two nights De Jessen and I spent in that God-forsaken hole; the second night there was no beer at Divisional Headquarters, and perhaps it was this that decided De Jessen to return to Salonika; he was convinced, he said, that the army would not advance farther up the Struma for many days, and to a modified extent his prophecy proved to be correct. Next morning he bade me good-bye and made his way southward, whilst I spent my day visiting the 2nd and 4th Divisions and Cavalry Brigade, which entailed a fifty-mile ride and fording the Struma twice.

During my absence the division had left the Garden of Eden and moved some six miles northwards on to the line of the mountain stream of Bistrica. I arrived upon this line a bare ten minutes after the division, and I do not think I shall ever forget the scene that met my eyes. So soon as the troops were allowed to dismiss, the whole division raced down the gentle slope, as one man, towards the belt of trees which two or three hundred

yards below marked the watercourse. The division took to the water *en masse*; it soaked its faces in it and drank, and then it buried its hands and heads in it, then it threw off its clothing and wallowed in it. For two miles all along the narrow mountain streamlet there was nothing to be seen but naked men simply revelling in the ice-cold waters which raced down from the mountain side. I have seldom seen a Greek laugh, and rarely does he smile; I have certainly never seen any number of Greeks laughing together, save on this occasion only. They behaved just like a Fresh Air Fund shipped from the East End of London on to Margate sands; they cried to one another and splashed and spluttered and wallowed, and when they thought of it they drank again and again. After they had absorbed all the water that they could, both inwardly and outwardly, they proceeded to wash their clothing. Was ever such a washing-day in the history of Macedonia?

We in the British Army have what we call Sanitary Companies, and I can see the hair rise upon the heads of the officers of this branch of the R.A.M.C. when they read of how men drank and swam and washed, and washed their clothing, and watered their horses, in the same river, and all at the same time; but then perhaps these officers have never spent forty-eight blighted hours at Livonovo—if they had they would understand. Also they would understand the nonchalance with which the discovery of three water-logged cholera-stricken Bulgarian corpses, found higher up stream, was treated by those who were made privy to the discovery; I think the feeling that we had was, that if we were going to die of cholera we could at least thank God and the Bistricea for a good drink first; cholera and the devil could do their worst; we had had one hour of glorious enjoyment.

That evening I was invited to go out and look at our outposts, who had established themselves along a ridge previously occupied by the Bulgarians. Evidently the Bulgarians had been moved to joyfulness by the proximity of moderately clear water, for not only had they garrisoned their trenches with little dummy men made of straw and stones, but they had made an effigy of a Bulgarian bear to which they had pinned a notice—"Au



MACEDONIA, 1913. A GREEK CAMP.



THE RIVER BISTRITZA : THE RUSH OF THE TROOPS FOR WATER
210]

reservoir ; we are going back for a little, but we shall see you at Athens." It was the one touch of humour of which the Bulgarians can boast during the whole of the campaign ; their jesting otherwise has been of a far grimmer description.

That night we were vouchsafed yet another boon—it rained, beautiful wet drops that cleaned the dust-ridden foliage of the trees and fell gratefully upon the parched earth. Just as I was turning in, an officer arrived with two bits of information which were priceless to me as a war correspondent ; one was to the effect that the army would not advance for some days, until the other divisions upon our right and left had come into line ; the other was a rumour that an attempt was to be made to land a Greek force at Dedeagatch, which is the easternmost port on the Ægean Sea before one comes to Enos, where the treaty of London had established the new Turkish frontier. It was raining fairly hard, also there was a good deal of thunder and lightning about, and my horse was too tired to move that night ; but next day I was up betimes, and riding hot-foot towards Salonika. I was lucky enough to catch a train at Hadji-Bailik which landed me in Salonika before noon next morning. I found Hadji-Bailik in a state of woe ; the King and his Headquarters Staff had been established here for the best part of the week, and that morning one of the staff-officers, a general favourite, had died of cholera. They say that one place is as good as another to die in, but it struck me that the little lonely grave beside the railway track looked uncommonly lonesome. I found the atmosphere of Headquarters very depressed ; most of the officers were thinking of their lost comrade, and the others were making preparations for a departure on the morrow, for it had been decided to move Headquarters farther forward.

Judge of my surprise when I discovered the spot selected was none other than that delightful health resort and watering place—Livonovo. Eight days later, when I myself went back there, I found the King himself in full possession of the very verandah out of which De Jessen and I had fled in painful itching. King Constantine is a brave man !

As I walked into my hotel at Salonika I found myself boisterously greeted from the other side of the restaurant by no less a person than De Jessen himself : he told me that I had just come in the nick of time ; that he and Magrini—the energetic correspondent of the *Secolo*—were starting for Cavalla in ten minutes ; that the boat was waiting, and that at Cavalla the fleet and several transports were mustering to prepare for a disembarkation at Dedeagatch. I begged De Jessen to do his best to keep the boat whilst I snatched a hasty meal and sent a despatch to my paper ; and this he very successfully did.

CHAPTER VIII

CAVALLA

As may be well imagined, the twenty-four hours of ease and comfort on board ship were a blessed relief for me, but on arrival at Cavalla a disappointment was in store for us. We and the transports who had accompanied us were bidden to make for Thasos, where we found the Greek fleet lying off the north-eastern extremity of the island.

The *Averoff*—Admiral Condouriotis' flag-ship—fluttered a bunch of flags at us, and our captain went overside into his gig. Presently a busy little steam pinnace raced up to our accommodation-ladder, and the admiral's flag-lieutenant came aboard. He had been informed by wireless of our coming, and he had been sent by the admiral to bid us welcome, but at the same time to inform us that we had come in vain—that, to use vulgar parlance, "There wasn't going to be no landing." The *Spezzia* (battleship), accompanied by three destroyers, had just returned from reconnoitring the coast occupied by the Bulgarians, from Port Lagos down to Dedeagatch, and had found it absolutely strewn with mines. Without further orders from the Government at Athens the admiral did not feel himself at liberty to risk his vessels in attempting to run the blockade; at Dedeagatch itself they had found six batteries of Bulgarian field artillery—the guns neatly sandwiched in between the houses occupied by the Greek subjects, whilst on the hill behind the little seaport six siege guns pointed their noses seawards. The reconnoitring squadron had also ascertained the fact that between 22,000 and 25,000 troops were in this theatre of war, and obviously the disembarkation of a Greek force upon this coast was not an

operation which could be lightly undertaken. We three journalists considered the matter seriously by light of this information ; we also made pressing inquiries as to when we could get back to Salonika, but finding there was no likelihood of a boat going there for at least twenty-four hours, we decided to disembark and to explore Cavalla and its hinterland.

Cavalla is vaguely reminiscent of Cadiz, with its white houses rising tier above tier throwing their image upon the blue waters of a waveless bay ; there perhaps the resemblance ends, for Cavalla is surmounted by a fine old Venetian fortress and surrounded by bleak hills. The town itself, although it boasts some 40,000 inhabitants, is composed of narrow, ill-paved streets, but possesses nothing better than the most miserable kind of jetty whereon hundreds of soldiers, mules, horses, guns, and other impedimenta of war were being landed by lighters from the transports lying out in the bay.

The process was a long one, as not only had men, beasts and baggage to be transhipped from the vessels into lighters, but the lighters when they drew alongside the jetty were some 5 ft. below the level of the stonework. It was an extraordinary sight seeing the soldiers literally boosting the frightened animals from the lighter on to the shore : a couple of men would get hold of each hind leg, another three or four on shore would pull on the halter-ropes, whilst two or three others would make weird noises and poke the animals vigorously when they could reach them. Usually the animal arrived on shore inextricably mixed up with the men on the end of the halter, leaving four bruised soldiers in the bottom of the lighter rubbing themselves soothingly, and wondering if they had fallen from an aeroplane. However, where there's a will there's a way, and the Greek "Tommy" is nothing if not willing ; Cavalla enjoyed the spectacle immensely.

Cavalla is the centre of the Turkish tobacco trade, from which nine-tenths of its wealth (and it is for its size an extremely wealthy city) is derived. The town abounds in tobacco warehouses, over some of which we were conducted by the extremely hospitable employees of various Anglo-American tobacco companies. Not

only did these gentlemen supply us with most excellent cigarettes, but they gave us what is journalistically termed, I believe, an excellent "screed."

Throughout the Bulgarian occupation they had been practically prisoners in the town; they had commenced by being very pro-Bulgarian in their sympathies—they were not sorry to see the Turk go. But familiarity apparently not only breeds contempt, but hearty hatred, where the Bulgar is concerned. There was not one of these men, either Englishmen or American, who had not an intense loathing for the Bulgar and all his works, and more especially for his methods of misgovernment. For close upon eight months these young fellows had been practically prisoners, and for the last eight days, at all events, they had every reason to know that their very lives were in imminent danger. During all that period they had had practically no intercourse with the outer world; for the Bulgarian has a novel method of establishing a censorship over correspondence and newspapers. Not being much of a linguist himself, he finds that it saves time and trouble to merely confiscate all incoming and outgoing postal packets. For all intents and purposes the citizens of Cavalla had been as much cut off from the outer world as if they had lived on a small island in the South Pacific, instead of in a one-time prosperous port in the Eastern Mediterranean. To live in Cavalla was like living in Prussia—only ten times worse—everything was forbidden! Any attempt at trading was quite impossible. The representatives of the English and American companies indeed attempted to do their best before they grasped the hollow mockery of which they were being made the victims.

The manager of one company told me an amusing anecdote of how he went to call upon the chief fiscal representative of the Bulgarian Government. He took an interpreter with him, for the Bulgarian refuses to recognise the existence of any other language but his own. He explained his business, the exact nature of which I forget, but it was simply a compliance with some mere formality. This high Bulgarian official pretended that he could not understand a word, even from the interpreter, until his intellect was brightened by the

transfer of a golden sovereign—then he smiled pleasantly, and promised all sorts of things. Whilst my friend was gathering his hat and papers together he was succeeded by a Turk, who also had business to transact of a similar nature; but the Turk knew his Bulgarian better—he bought the same smile and the same valueless promise for the more modest sum of fivepence. Then my friend went downstairs feeling that he had been badly “had.”

It is said that the Bulgarian has no commercial instinct, but this is a base calumny; he has. He conceived the idea that a town cannot be self-supporting for an unlimited period, and, provided the import of foodstuffs and other commodities was strictly forbidden, the price of things is apt to rise. At Cavalla the Bulgarian officials strictly prohibited the importation of goods of any kind or description until the town was practically upon the verge of starvation, then the port was thrown open to one or two favoured vessels chartered by the Bulgarian Government, and as these did not suffice to fulfil the wants of the place, a few other vessels were allowed to land their cargoes, which were valued upon disembarkation at average market prices, and nominally purchased by the Bulgarian officials by the transfer of a useless slip of paper written in Bulgarian, which sometimes took the form of a jest, and when translated meant, “You can exchange this piece of paper for ten thousand Turkish pounds, if you can find any fool who will give you that for it,” and then the cargo was sold at siege prices to such of the inhabitants as still had money left—the change, if any, being invariably given in depreciated Bulgarian notes. During the last month or two the average price of an egg was 11*d.* Bread was 3*s.* per lb., and other commodities were priced accordingly.

It was practically impossible either to enter or leave the town without obtaining the most special of special permissions countersigned by an army of clerks and officials, each of whom had to be bribed—not in Bulgarian money! During the last week the situation became really critical when the Bulgarians decided that they would have to abandon the town. A certain gallant officer came down to the principal hotel and boasted openly that he, and a company of men, were being left

behind to burn and sack the town and massacre the inhabitants. He seemed to like the idea of the job, and especially gloated over the prospect of laying out the little Anglo-American colony. The tale of the relief of Cavalla is like a page from fiction.

On the afternoon that the bulk of the Bulgarian garrison, some 4,000 men in all, abandoned the town, leaving only a battalion to act as rearguard, in addition to the company detailed to sack, pillage and massacre (as per programme), the officer commanding the artillery "went on strike"; he refused to leave his guns behind until the last minute, so that they might assist in the work of demolishing the city. He said that it was far too risky a business, and that his guns might be captured; in defiance of orders he marched his batteries in column of route out of the town. Whether he was considered a renegade or a humanitarian has not transpired, but his murdered corpse was found upon the road a mile or so outside the city, as also was that of another Bulgarian officer who had been somewhat over-lenient to the population.

That evening the searchlights along the sea-front and in the fortress were very busy whipping the sea with their beams of light. The citizens had retired behind locked doors and were thinking with terrible forebodings of the morrow. Not a boat was to be seen on the smooth waters of the bay, for the Bulgarians had long forbidden even pleasure-boats from taking the water, and even bathing had been forbidden; but there was a certain Turkish waterman, one Abdul Kader, who bethought him of the sanctity of his home, and feared greatly the happenings of the morrow; cautiously and silently he crept to where his miserable flat-bottomed skiff was lying high and dry upon the beach. Gradually and with immense exertion he urged it silently over the sand toward the water's edge. How he dodged the incessant patrols of Bulgarian sentries remains a mystery; but at last his skiff took the water, and with muffled oars he rowed valiantly out to sea. The beams of inquisitive searchlights made a tangle of light upon the waves, but Abdul Kader rowed steadily on, placing his trust in Allah and feeling that if the worst came to the worst,

he, a sailor-man, could perhaps hold his own against any Bulgarian land-lubbers who managed to get afloat in his pursuit. Luck was on the side of pluck; hour after hour he bent to his oars, and the grim eyes of the search-lights faded gradually into the distance, the black outline of the unlit town was no longer visible. He was alone upon the waters of the straits. The violent current that laps this corner of the Ægean Sea fretted at his barque, but with tireless energy he rowed and rowed and went on rowing all through the long hours of the night, until, just as dawn was breaking and his last reserve of strength was failing him, the bow of his skiff brushed against the torpedo-nets of the Greek flagship off the island of Thasos. The machine-gun which had been following his barque for the last half-hour nodded ominously at a desperate angle, and a sentry challenged loudly.

In such few words of Greek as he knew, the Turkish fisherman told his tale to the officer of the watch.

At sunrise the town was to be fired and the inhabitants massacred; the bulk of the Bulgarian garrison had left the city overnight. If only a Greek warship would show her nose in the bay, Cavalla might yet be saved. He had hardly finished speaking when another patch of darkness was seen struggling over the waters: a Greek fisherman had had exactly the same idea, the same courage, the same endurance, and he had come to tell his countrymen the same piteous tale of men waiting for death, and women dreading dishonour and praying for the advent of the blue-and-white flag.

In a moment all was bustle aboard, signal lamps flashed faintly in the gathering light of dawn, the sleeping squadron awoke; there was a clank of anchors coming home, and in less time than it takes to tell a British-built Greek destroyer was knocking 36 knots an hour out of her engines across the straits towards Cavalla.

The rest of the story, told by the solitary Bulgarian officer captured amongst the Cavalla garrison, is almost as dramatic as the incidents which I have just recounted. He was second in command of the fortress that overlooks the town; his orders were at dawn to look for the sign of burning houses in the city below; he was then to fire the magazine and to withdraw through the

main street, setting fire to all the houses and massacring any of the inhabitants whom he could find. He was straining his eyes in the half-light that precedes the dawn to catch a glimpse of the first fire, which was to be his signal, when suddenly his attention was attracted by the boom of a cannon fired at no great distance across the bay ; fixing his glasses upon a spot, he saw the nose of a low grey vessel passing rapidly round the promontory. He was no seaman, for the Bulgarians are an inland race, and hold in holy terror all things appertaining to the sea. To him that long low prow was the bow of the *Averoff*—the nightmare of the Bulgarian coastwise garrisons. He imagined that the Greek fleet were about to effect a surprise, and rapidly calling his men together, and forgetting all else, he fled through the town. Five minutes later the plucky little destroyer landed one officer and a dozen men to take possession of the port of Cavalla—an exploit which was successfully achieved. Surely cheek is a wondrous thing, and even in warfare a little bluff may go a long way. It is to the courage of a Turkish and a Greek fisherman, and the pluck and cheek of a dozen Greek sailors, that the 40,000 inhabitants of Cavalla owe their lives and their property.

It was four days before we could get a boat back from Cavalla to Salonika, and we spent that time in investigating the Bulgarian atrocities which had been perpetrated at Doxat and at Serres, the which have now become notorious throughout the world, and a description of which I could well spare my readers, were it not for the fact that King Ferdinand himself has challenged the veracity of the Greek accounts.

The story of these two gigantic insults to modern civilisation deserves a chapter apart, but I cannot refrain from emphasising the fact that, had it not been for the timely warning to the Greek fleet, the prosperous town of Cavalla would have shared the fate of its sister city—Serres, and another 40,000 victims or so would have been added to the stupendous and appalling list of peaceable inhabitants, who have met their death at the hands of the Bulgarian soldiery during the past nine months.

CHAPTER IX

THE MASSACRES OF SERRES AND DOXAT

PHILOSOPHERS tell us that human suffering is not cumulative, and I was personally surprised to discover that the philosophers are right. I must admit to being profoundly moved over the horrors of Nigritta, but I put such a tax upon my sympathy then that I fear I had little left for the victims of subsequent massacres. Nor was this purely personal, for other correspondents, men of international fame, told me that they experienced exactly the same sensations: frequently one or other or all of us—De Jessen, Magrini, René Puaux, and others, perhaps less well known—would be invited to go and verify some act of ferocity. The invitation was couched in the most hair-raising language, the number of victims was frequently something appalling, but the invitation left us cold; we had literally exhausted the whole of our human sympathy; we had seen the horrors at their very worst, both retail and wholesale, and the fact that another batch of horrors had been committed failed to move us.

When I compare my feelings on visiting Nigritta with those which I subsequently experienced when I was invited to come out and view the mangled corpses of 2,000 victims at Doxat, I am surprised at my own callousness. However, duty is duty, and even although it is impossible to work up one's own feelings and therefore to write something worthy of one's own pen, it is the duty of the conscientious war correspondent to at least set down the facts upon paper, and this is the course I propose to pursue as regards Serres and Doxat.

If the reader wishes to be harrowed, let him turn to the chapter on Nigritta, let him look at the illustrations

which I have published in this book, or if he is a glutton for horrors I shall be pleased to supply him, on loan, with a far more revolting set of photographs.

I have already described the movements of the Greek 7th Division in front of Serres; I have blamed the army for not advancing on that town during the seven days that it was unoccupied by the Bulgarian troops, and I think that the only thing which remains for me to do is to retail the story told to me by a Greek professor of foreign languages who was one of the unhappy inhabitants of the town.

Being an able-bodied man, he naturally joined the town militia, which was organised the day after the Bulgarian general, Ivanoff, left the city. For six days he took his turn of duty upon the hills about Serres, protecting it from the casual bands of comitadjis and Bulgarian soldiery, who from time to time endeavoured to force an entrance. On the night before the general conflagration he retired to his bed dead weary and worn out by the unaccustomed physical exertions of his self-imposed task; he was aroused by his bedroom door being burst open by some Bulgarian soldiers accompanied by one comitadji. He felt the supreme moment of his existence had come, but being somewhat of a philosopher he felt that it was useless to kick against a stone wall. "Come out into the street," they cried; he replied that he was undressed, but they said that that made no matter.

Baring his chest, he cried, "If you have come to kill me, do it now, and here; I refuse to go out into the street to be made a jest of. You can please yourselves!"

Evidently this sort of sport did not appeal to the Bulgarians, who thought that they might find more amusing objects for their jests elsewhere, and eventually the soldiers went away, leaving the comitadji in charge, whilst my professor leisurely dressed and shaved himself; then they went out into the street together, the comitadji holding a sharpened bayonet in his hand as a reminder that resistance would be useless.

"We found our way," the professor told me, "along the streets of the town, which I hardly recognised, for

the roadway was blocked with the goods which looters had dragged out from the shops, windows and doors had been broken in, and every house ransacked; every now and again we came across a few corpses, some of whom I recognised as being those of shopkeepers with whom I had been accustomed to deal. Not infrequently we had to cross the street to avoid the flames of some house which had been fired. It was a long tramp through the streets, for I lived almost on the edge of the town. At one street corner I found a Turkish bread-seller who had the reputation of being a Bulgarian secret agent; the sight of him and his wares reminded me that I was hungry, and I remembered that I had not eaten anything since dawn the previous day, and it was now close upon noon. I bought a loaf of bread and tucked it under my arm, whilst my escort jeered at me and said, 'When you have been killed that bread will come in useful for me.' I replied, that if I was going to be killed, I preferred to die with something in my stomach.

"Although my escort was profoundly suspicious, I managed with deep guile to persuade him to take a road which passed quite close to the Austrian Consulate; I nourished the hope that if the door were open I might manage to bolt in there and seek protection. Luck favoured me; we reached the corner of the Consulate, and at the door there stood the cavass, who was an acquaintance of mine, and an old friend apparently of my escort's. We started a conversation, and gradually the cavass opened the door from a mere slit until it was half open. I started a discussion, which I hoped would develop into a wrangle, and when the two participants had thoroughly warmed to their subject I made a bolt through the door into the corridor behind; but my luck was out, for there I ran against a Bulgarian officer accompanied by some soldiers who were holding converse with the Austrian Vice-Consul. This official was clothed in the full insignia of his office, and was attempting to stand on such of his dignity as remained to him. The Bulgarian had begun by ordering him, his household and his protégés to surrender, a request which was indignantly refused; but subsequently it was pointed out to the Consul that the houses all about were on fire,

and that if he and his would come forward they would be escorted to a place of safety; if they refused they must inevitably perish in the flames, the heat of which we could already feel.

“At last the Consul submitted to the inevitable, and throwing open the door from a near courtyard, he told those within to come forth. It was a pitiable spectacle: some two hundred beings who had sought in vain the protection of the Double Eagle filed through the door along the corridor, whilst a dozen Bulgarian soldiers with fixed bayonets grinned at them and jested, uttering unprintable threats. As an old inhabitant and professor of foreign languages, I recognised most of the people in that unhappy gathering. There were perhaps a dozen men amongst them, the remainder being women and children, for the most part of the well-to-do classes; there were three or four young ladies amongst them who had been my pupils; and I was surprised to see hobbling along an old lady who I knew had not quitted her bed for fifteen years. The faces of one and all were anxious and drawn, for this thing came upon them as a shock. I believe that I myself was the least moved, for I am a bit of a philosopher, and I had reconciled my mind to the worst, feeling that in the meantime my one duty was to try and ease the way for all these others. We trooped out into the street amongst the smoke and flames of the surrounding houses; we wended our way among falling roofs and out-bursting walls, until in due course we reached the edge of the city. There our captors headed us for the mountains. Then began our Calvary: hour after hour through the pitiless heat of the day, over the sharp stones, across precipitous ravines, we marched sadly onward. The foot-gear of most of that sad cortège was totally unsuited for mountain paths.

“After a bit those who suffered most, or those who were the weakest, fell by the way, and it was only the sharpness of Bulgarian bayonets and the cruellest of threats which managed to keep the tail of our column moving. One old lady I myself, although I am not a strong man, carried on my back for a long while, and at various places we left some of our number behind us. The older and ugliest amongst the women were allowed

to lie where they fell, after the administration of a few kicks, but one small child and an old man who could go no farther were sent on their last long journey by the bayonets of our escort. So we tramped all the long afternoon, infinitely weary, infinitely thirsty, and infinitely sore at heart. I myself attempted to make friends with the members of our escort. The officer had left us, and we were in charge of a sergeant-major; with him I talked at considerable length as we went along, and the impression that I made bore fruit later.

“Towards three o'clock we met a staff-officer whom I knew; to him I made appeal to help us in our plight, but he said it was no business of his, and that he could not interfere. A little later two middle-aged ladies, who had been bearing up bravely and doing their best to cheer their fellow sufferers, asked me if I could remember the words or the air of the hymn played by the band of the *Titanic* as that great liner had taken her last plunge into the sea. My English is by no means my best language, but I remembered the first few lines of that now famous death-dirge—‘Nearer, my God, to Thee,’ and with such little voice as was left me from the physical exertion of climbing the steep places, I sang, and was joined by my comrades in misfortune, who, not knowing the words, hummed the melody. A stop was instantly put to this by our escort, and so again we were constrained to go on in silence. Why lengthen the tale of our horrors? It was towards sunset that we reached an open space, and here our sergeant-major bade us halt, and in the roughest voice at his command he ordered us to form three groups—men, women, and children; he then explained that some of the men were worse than others, and that these he proposed to have killed there and then.

“During that terrible march I had been thinking out what would be the best course to pursue when it came to the final tragedy; I felt that I myself, although prepared to die, could not face seeing other people killed in front of me, and least of all could I bear the thought of what would happen to the women and children when all the men were killed. I had thought it all out quietly, and I had come to the conclusion that the best thing to do was to provoke our captors into killing us all at once



SERRES AFTER THE BULGARIAN EVACUATION OF THE TOWN.
The Bulgar boasts that he is the "Prussian of the Levant." His claim appears to have been substantiated.

and out of hand. Armed with this resolve I stood forward and placed my hand upon the shoulder of the sergeant-major. For a moment only my courage failed me, and I stood mute; then the fear in the eyes of the women about me gave me fresh courage to play the awful part I had to play. I am something of an actor, and I forced myself to play my part in this our tragedy.

“ ‘Scoundrel and murderer!’ I cried; ‘you are a liar—there are none of us worse than others; here we all die or none of us die. Yonder behind us already the Greek Evzones have taken possession of Serres and are following hard on our tracks. There,’ and I pointed to the Vice-Consul, ‘stands the representative of a great European power: when he is dead, you and those who helped to kill him will be offered as a sacrifice by your own Bulgarian Government, to assuage the anger of the Austrian Empire.’ Seeing that I had made a great impression upon the superstitious soldiers about me, I assumed the attitude of a clairvoyant, and stretching out my arms in the most melodramatic manner, I assumed a vacant stare and a far-away voice.

“ ‘Those about to die,’ I wailed, ‘see visions. The gift of sight is given to me: I see far away across the mountains over there to the north a house—it is your house,’ I cried, and struck the sergeant-major in the chest; he winced, and I risked a further prophecy: ‘At the window of the house I see a woman stretching out her arms for help. She is your wife!’ The shot went home—the man was obviously married. ‘There in the heavens I see the Angel of Death, bearing a torch in his hand, swoop from the sky and set fire to that house, and the woman cannot escape!’ The sergeant-major shuddered. ‘Vengeance is mine, cries the angel; and there, and there, and there he stoops, and each time he brings death to you, and you, and you!’ and I picked out the most superstitious-looking of the soldiers about me. Now at least there was no doubt of the impression that I had made; the soldiers were shivering and whispering to each other. For a few minutes I raved—I do not know what nonsense I talked, but it had the desired effect. At last, when I had worked up to a climax, I cried, ‘There is but one way you can buy mercy: send

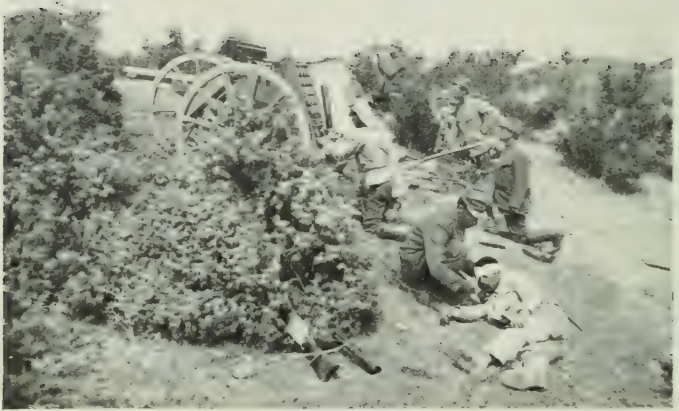
us back to our homes, and go ye swiftly and offer burning candles upon the altars of your village churches.' Then, turning to my fellow captives about me, I whispered hurriedly—'Those of you men who have money, give quickly; women, shed your jewels.'

"The word passed round like magic, and in a minute or two we had distributed all our belongings amongst the soldiery. When we came to reckon it up afterwards it was some £600 in cash, and I know not what value of jewellery and trinkets. But our lives were saved, and we were told to depart in peace. We left our late captors squabbling over the spoil as we wound our way back along the mountain path. Six hours it had taken us to climb up, and it took us as long to go down, for we were very weary, and no longer had the spur of Bulgarian bayonets to quicken our footsteps; as we went we sang hymns, and then I suddenly bethought me of the loaf of bread which all that day I had unconsciously carried.

"The Bible tells of a miracle of feeding a multitude upon an inadequate food-supply, and with my loaf of bread I repeated the miracle, for few of us had appetite to eat after our mental sufferings. As we neared the town, a little after midnight, we were singing a Greek mountain melody which tells of the mountaineer who returns to his home. We had finished one halting stanza when suddenly clear and strong across the night air was borne the melody of the second verse, sung by the lusty lungs of an Evzone company on outpost duty, and then at last we knew we were safe. I cannot speak of the welcome we received at the hands of those gallant fellows, but whenever I think of what is noble in this sordid life the stanza of that melody comes back to me. . . ."

I have attempted to give an outline of the story of one survivor as it was told to me; twenty other journalists at least, several diplomats and Consular authorities have, at the invitation of King Constantine, visited Serres, and verified all the deeds of shame that were perpetrated there. I can only say that of all the inhabitants, those who accompanied the Austrian Vice-Consul in the mountain trek that I have just described, escaped the lightest.

The big and prosperous town itself has been burnt to



JULY 1913. GREEK FIELD GUN IN ACTION.



DOXAT MASSACRE : A GROUP OF GREEK VILLAGERS.
The Bulgars had passed that way!

the ground ; the number of burnt and massacred victims is never likely to be ascertained, but the pillage and bloodshed was conducted on colossal and wholesale lines.

Between Cavalla and Drama, and within a few thousand yards of famous Philippi, a few months ago existed the prosperous village of Doxat. When the Bulgarians retired from Cavalla, Doxat lay on their road, and they wreaked their vengeance upon it. The place was fired, and such villagers as could not make good their escape from the streets were incontinently murdered ; but the bulk of the inhabitants fled before the oncoming army, and making a detour, struck south again toward Cavalla. Hereabouts the country is dead flat, and the running villagers could be seen for miles. A gallant regiment of Bulgarian cavalry whose swords were yet innocent of blood gave chase. All across that plain they pursued the fugitives, striking them down as they overtook them. Not to be outdone in this noble deed of arms, a regiment of Bulgarian infantry with fixed bayonets followed behind and finished up the work of the mounted branch.

A few days after, when that ghastly plain was visited by journalists and consular envoys, the corpses of 2,000 villagers were found. Mostly they fell in little groups which represented families ; obviously when each group was overtaken by the horsemen, the men turned at bay and endeavoured with their naked hands to arrest the oncoming foe, to give the women and children time to run a little farther. Each little group of corpses told the same tale ; following the track of the Bulgarians first one came upon the corpse of a man, or perhaps two or three male corpses ; there would be sabre-cuts about the head or shoulders, and a score or so of bayonet wounds upon the body. Five or sometimes even twenty yards away would be a little group of bodies—the women and the children. I do not wish to dwell upon the details of this shambles, but one feature of the Doxat massacre deserves to be perpetuated in the history of infamy and brutality. Having accomplished their bloody work, the horsemen and foot-soldiers formed up and marched victoriously through the ruins of the burnt village, and at their head went the erstwhile officials of the Bulgarian Government at Cavalla, the civil governor,

the military governor, the judge, and the priest; and since they could find no flag to precede them, they chose the emblem most suitable to their race—that of a baby of six months, spitted upon the bayonet of an infantryman who walked proudly in advance of this triumphal procession.

One other incident of Doxat, since it savours somewhat of poetic justice, is worthy of being recorded. It will perhaps be remembered that in the winter of 1912 King Ferdinand visited the provinces of Turkey occupied by his army, and at Philippi he had himself photographed standing upon some steps with an ancient doorway as a background. The great French paper *L'Illustration* produced a full-page drawing of King Ferdinand standing there in a triumphal attitude, and underneath the drawing ran the legend, "L'attitude d'un Conquérant." It was a picture which made a considerable sensation at the time; the legend and the portrait were so lifelike. . . . On those same steps and with that same background were found the mutilated corpses of a man, a woman, and a little child; and had I been an artist I would have dearly loved to have drawn in the portrait of King Ferdinand in his splendid attitude standing above the corpses of the victims of his "glorious Army"; for it is over such as these only that the Bulgarians have been able to prove victorious during the recent campaign.

CHAPTER X

THE KRESNA PASS

FROM Livonovo to the Bulgarian frontier set upon the summit of the Rilo Mountains is some fifty miles as the crow flies, but eighty as the road winds. Looking at the proposition of attaining the Bulgarian frontier from a military point of view, the Kresna Pass is the chief obstacle; half-way between Livonovo and the frontier a solid block of mountains bars the way, through which the rapid waters of the Struma have in the course of bygone æons bored a tortuous passage; and alongside the Struma, sometimes high up upon the precipitous mountain ledge, sometimes away down beside the waters themselves in the sunless ravine, the genius of man has carved a roadway. Looking at the Kresna Pass as an isolated military position, it is impregnable; but, like all military positions, it can be turned. Those in Salonika who knew the geography of the country but did not know King Constantine were under the impression that a desperate stand would be made by the Bulgarians in the Kresna Pass.

I myself, who had not yet seen this freak of nature, was convinced that King Constantine would never butt the head of his army against anything so impregnable as this mountain gorge was reputed to be. I was correct in my surmise.

It was on July 22nd that the Greek divisions, having got into line in front of Livonovo, commenced their march northward, and on the 25th they arrived in front of the southern opening of the Kresna Pass. The defile was no less impressive than I had been led to understand; as an isolated position it was undoubtedly absolutely impregnable. Our 1st Division along the road

butted up against the outposts of the Bulgarian position just for the sake of keeping the enemy in play, but upon our right the 6th and 7th Divisions, supported by the 5th, were making a wide turning movement, whilst on our left the 2nd, 4th, 3rd and 10th Divisions were bringing their left shoulders up, threatening to outflank the enemy, and to chip in at Semitli—five miles in rear of the Pass, and thus cut the Bulgarian defenders off should they indulge in too prolonged a resistance.

The ground over which the flanking divisions passed beggars description ; the men were right up amongst the summits of the loftiest mountains in Macedonia, 7,000 feet above sea-level, where one grilled at noonday in the sun, and had to brush the hoar-frost from one's clothing at dawn. To add to the discomforts of the climate, the mountain ridges were acute and serrated, and the advancing columns were obliged to make their own paths amongst the rocks from one peak to another. I do not think that the Bulgarians had given the Greeks credit for being able to negotiate so difficult a terrain ; at all events the actual garrison of the Pass had neglected to sufficiently protect its flanks. In the centre there was a combat of some six hours' duration, which resulted in fairly heavy casualties ; but on the flanks the Greek advancing posts were able to brush aside the Bulgarian resistance, and the Bulgarian central force, finding its flanks driven back and its own retreat becoming hourly more insecure, abandoned their positions towards sunset, and fell back through the Pass, leaving a small rearguard to follow, which conscientiously destroyed the many bridges and viaducts which carried the road from side to side across the meandering river.

The casualties at the Battle of Kresna—as I prefer to call it—were comparatively insignificant : 1,000 Greeks out of action, and some 2,000 Bulgarians. As a battle it presented but little interest, for it was obvious from the very first that the tactical resistance could be but slight in view of the Greek strategical enveloping movement. All next day, the Greek infantry, aided and abetted by their engineers, filed through the Pass, which is fifteen miles long, and in no place more than fifty yards wide ; the average depth being perhaps 3,000 feet, so far as

one can see, but at least double that height to the invisible summits of the mountains above the line of sight. Behind the infantry followed the artillery of practically the whole army, for it was only along the main road that it was possible to drag field guns. The difficulties of the Kresna Pass were appalling; bridges had been destroyed where the span had stood one or two hundred feet above the water-line. To negotiate such an obstacle necessitated cutting an approach down a precipitous rock-side to the water's edge, throwing a bridge across the river and cutting another roadway up to the old level. If the Greek engineers had failed the army ten days before, as I have hinted they did, they amply made up for their shortcomings in the stupendous work which they accomplished in the Pass. It is almost incredible that even with modern appliances human ingenuity could contrive to pass an army through that narrow gorge under the difficulties which the Greeks had to face.

At the northern mouth of the Pass the Greek army met with a fresh Bulgarian resistance, and at this moment their position was somewhat critical; for fifteen miles behind them the Pass was absolutely choked with guns, transport, wounded troops, and all the flotsam and jetsam of war; along their front, facing the Bulgarian positions, they could not produce a single field gun, whilst the Bulgarians themselves had developed an excellent firing line well garnished with cannon, with all the ranges carefully measured. As the Greek columns debouched from the defile they came under a galling and concentrated fire. The leading battalions deployed at the double over the rocks to the right and left, those moving to the right having to pass through the river, in which dozens of men were caught by the current and sucked under; but any attempt to establish a useful firing line that evening was doomed to failure. Under cover of the night the Greeks squeezed two batteries through the Pass and got them into position, and next morning, as dawn broke, under cover of these batteries they ousted the Bulgarians out of their positions at the point of the bayonet.

It is very difficult to impress upon the minds of people who were not there the sinister nature of the Kresna

Pass. I am intimately acquainted with the gorge from which Gustav Doré took his inspiration for his "Inferno," but I think that in many places the Kresna Pass would have suited his purpose as well. There is an oppressive feeling of being dominated on all sides, one feels impotent, one has fits of nerves totally unjustifiable, one imagines all sorts of things might happen; it is like the very elongated neck of a bottle, and it is calculated to have a terrible morale effect upon any troops engaged in battling therein. To my thinking the Bulgarians showed great wisdom in not disputing seriously the entrance to the Pass, for with their troops in the condition in which they were they would have been haunted by the everlasting dread of having their communications cut, when they would have had to face the terrible ordeal of going through the Pass assailed by an enemy. But if they were wise in refusing to dispute the entry to the Pass, they showed a great lack of determination in failing to put up an adequate defence against the Greek army when it attempted to force its exit from the Pass. Here at least, with their flanks secure and no terrible gorge to traverse in their rear, they could afford to make a stand until absolutely driven out of their positions; they did not do this, and thus they missed their opportunity, and the result was that Greek public opinion was tremendously buoyed up, not only by the capturing of the Pass, but in passing the defile entirely. The Bulgarians made a great mistake, and two days later they suffered for it at the battle which has erroneously been called Semitli, of which I shall tell in the next chapter.

There is one tale of the horrors of that defile which I should like to recount, although I myself was not a witness, for when I passed through I was spurring my steed to its utmost, and could find no time for gathering impressions by the way; but Mr. George Scott, the well-known Paris artist, picked me out a little word-sketch which I should like to give to my readers. He and a journalistic friend were going through the Pass the day of the battle of Semitli; near the exit they found a field hospital set up at a place where the valley widens into the unusual width of perhaps 150 yards. In the centre of this flat space the hospital was installed,

and there in his shirt-sleeves stood a well-known doctor from Athens—a captain of the Reserve to boot—and perhaps one of the most skilled surgeons with the Greek army. He was clothed in the white smock affected by surgeons when they undertake operations; his sleeves were rolled up to the elbow, and his solitary assistant, half asleep, ministered to his wants and handed him the implements of his profession. Around him some five or six hundred wounded were lying, sitting, or standing, according to the gravity of their hurts, waiting their turn at the improvised operation-table.

Mr. Scott and his friend were passing by on horseback, and although they were anxious to ask questions, they saw that the doctor was far too busy to be interfered with, so they were passing on, when suddenly Dr. Carillo spotted their civilian garb and hailed them. He made a weird spectacle as he stood there, arms akimbo, his one-time white overall heavily stained with blood. All about were little wads of bandages, red and dark crimson, covered with flies. In front of him, upon a plank, the next victim was being stretched. He hailed the two civilians. "Gentlemen," he cried, "are you war-correspondents?" They named their papers—perhaps the two best known in France. Then, throwing his hands out in a helpless gesture which came strangely from so capable a man, "Tell Europe," he said, "what you see, and for God's sake tell me when this butchery will end. For forty-eight hours my arms have been dripping blood; I am fagged out, but I dare not stop, I must go on with my work; and see how my children are waiting for the knife. Tell Europe," he said, "that this is getting past endurance."

One can imagine the picture—the fine profile of that sturdy and skilled surgeon, the hundreds of wounded around him only waiting for his knife, the man himself tottering in the last stages of physical collapse from overwork and insomnia, and the parched ground about rich with the strange red flowers of blood-stained cotton-wool and bandages. This strong man appealing to the Press, appealing to Europe, appealing to humanity, to stop the awful carnage; and the frame of such a picture was in such a place—grim beetling cliffs above, the filthy

Struma gurgling in chocolate foam below, the only noise the tramp of hurrying men and beasts along the road, and the half-suppressed groans of long-enduring wounded. Whether Mr. Scott will make a picture of this impression remains to be seen, but if he does it is a picture which I believe will appeal to all the world.

I think the work of the engineers in the Presna Pass is worthy of the highest praise. In a previous chapter I have blamed them; it is now my pleasure to be able to praise. The road, such as I have pictured it, was a terrible enough military obstacle before the Bulgarians blew up every bridge and the stone supports of every narrow place; but I fear that I shall never be able to impress my reader with the enormous difficulties which at the very outset the passage of the Pass presented. I have ridden over the so-called road on horseback with the advanced troops of the army, I have gone over it later in a motor-car, and later again I have ridden it twice; and each time I have wondered how it was possible to persuade artillery to negotiate the sharp turns, the precipitous slopes and the rock-strewn surface. At places I have seen twenty horses straining all they knew to drag a field-gun; riding horses have stumbled time and time again, even men on foot panted and struggled. The first motor took six hours to accomplish the fifteen miles, and it was only owing to the presence of innumerable infantrymen who pulled on the drag ropes that the 60-horsepower car was able to make headway at all. But the Greek engineers were splendid—they just went right ahead, and not only did they instinctively find the best alternative routes where the existing roadway had been demolished, but they found it at once, and without hesitation they set to work to make the road as practicable as possible.

The Kresna Pass is really not a pass at all, it is a gorge burrowing through the heart of the mountains, and even in peace-time the majestic proportions of the mountains which border it must oppress the spirit of the wayfarer. In war-time the effect of this mighty gorge beggars description. But if I cannot find enough words to praise the men who cut their way through the Pass, what shall I say of those on the right and the left who formed

the flanks of the Greek army? There is no map in existence worth looking at, but the men of the 6th Division on the right and 2nd and 4th Divisions on the left not only accomplished a great military feat in their advance northward, but individually and collectively performed feats which might well be the envy of practised Alpine climbers. Slopes of one in two were considered easy-going, and there were many places where rifle-slings had to be joined together to form a rope to drag the men up the precipitous sides.

The athletic reader who is given to mountaineering may imagine that after all this is not such a wonderful feat; but he must remember that when he himself sets forth with guide and alpenstock in hand to conquer some mountain fastness, he does so under the most favourable conditions. Let him imagine himself deprived of guide, of rope, and frequently of boots; let him above all imagine the case of the wounded passing toward the rear; let him imagine their almost superhuman exertions to negotiate this country without assistance, and then perhaps he will arrive at some faint conception of the splendid work accomplished by the Greek soldiery amongst the cloud tops.

CHAPTER XI

THE BATTLE OF SEMITLI

THE river Struma in its course from Dubnitza to Livonovo runs practically in one continuous gorge, but three or four miles north of the entrance to the Kresna Pass the valley widens somewhat, the encircling mountains are less abrupt, and Semitli itself is the centre of a comparative plain of perhaps ten square miles (I say comparative because Snowdon range, for instance, would be flat compared with the surroundings of Semitli). Here the Bulgarians had established themselves, resting their right upon mountains some 5,000 ft. high, the summit of which is about six miles distant from Semitli; they faced south, and taking south as their centre, extended their left flank to the heights about Osenovo, some 4,000 ft. high, and some ten miles north-east of Semitli. Here our army, advancing, found their troops established. In the centre our 1st Division had been partially replaced by the 5th, whilst our 6th Division had been materially weakened to afford support to the troops on its left and right. Beyond the 6th Division, in the neighbourhood of Osenovo, our 7th Division formed our extreme right flank, but had not yet come into line. To the west (our left) the 2nd and 4th Divisions faced the Bulgarian front, whilst the 10th and 3rd Divisions were still farther to the west, and notably to the south, at Pechtsevo. Pechtsevo also formed the extreme right of the Serbian position, and it was here therefore that the two armies met. Until complete details are available, it is very difficult to affirm what actually happened, and I for one can only pretend to say what seemed to happen; but I also have the advantage of the testimony of prisoners taken from the enemy, who gave me a good idea of the battle of Semitli.

When the Bulgarian Staff state their case they may totally upset all my theories, but in the meantime I prefer to think that they are more or less correct, and unless the Bulgarians can produce excellent proof to the contrary, I shall probably still go on thinking that the following is a fairly accurate account of the battle, and the strategy which preceded it.

It must be remembered that at this moment the Bulgarian army was in an extremely difficult position along the Serbian frontier; they had made no headway; in front of Kustendil they had been able to easily maintain their positions, but in the direction of Tsarevoselo they had in all been driven back some nineteen miles by the Serbian soldiery. Still farther east the Greeks had met with quite unexpected success; they had not only prevented the Bulgarians from entering Salonika (their pet wish), they had also stopped them from wedging themselves in between the two Allies and severing their mutual connections. Moreover they had marched prodigiously well inland, until the Greek army was within striking distance of the Bulgarian frontier. Should the Greek centre succeed at any moment in bearing off yet another victory, not only was it inevitable that they would cross the frontier, but also the Bulgarian army facing the Serbs on the Greek left would have been obliged to retire.

From the Bulgarian point of view something had to be done; the defence of the Kresna Pass had been a failure, the further advance of the Greek army to Djumaia would have been fatal, since Djumaia is the very last position south of the Bulgarian frontier where troops could hope to make a stand. The Bulgarians elected to make a stand at Semitli, but they had a deeper plan than this. It has not yet transpired how the Bulgarians managed it, but whilst Ivanoff's army turned at bay to face the oncoming Greeks, the 1st Bulgarian Division, over 40,000 strong, was brought over from facing the Serbs in front of Kustendil to be thrown against the Greeks; doubtless the Bulgarians thought that if they could only turn the Greek right flank not only would the Serbs be greatly discouraged and the Greek line of communications threatened, but the road to Salonika would

lie open to them. In working out the plan of their resistance they made one fatal blunder. They not only underestimated hopelessly the grit and sticking power of the Greek soldier, but their scouts failed to find where our right flank rested; they thought that the 6th Division formed our extreme right, whereas for a matter of fact we had the whole of the 7th Division beyond this; they therefore, instead of attacking a flank, as they hoped to do, made a local frontal attack upon our right-centre. If the Bulgarians did not make this mistake, as I believe they did, they have no excuse whatever for the way in which they parcelled out their forces.

What actually happened was that when the 1st Bulgarian Division arrived (and the 1st is the flower of the Bulgarian army and answers to the Garde Corps in the German army), it was divided into three columns. One column, some 20,000 strong, was to strike at the Greek extreme left and try to cut in between it and the Serbians' extreme right; another column, 15,000 strong, was detailed to make an attack upon what they fondly imagined was the extreme Greek right, whilst a smaller column, consisting of 5,000 infantry, 12 guns and 500 artillery, were to make a flank march upon Mehomia, and doubtless threaten the whole Greek rear. Now the 7th Division, after its successful action at Nevrokop, had pushed on through Mehomia, leaving a small detachment there, and had joined up with the right of the 6th Division. This was where the Bulgarians miscalculated; and besides this fact luck was against them, for a Greek deserter from the Bulgarian army brought in the news of the surprise raid which was to be carried out at Mehomia, with the result that the surprise was all on the other side.

King Constantine ordered the 7th Division to detach a strong force to countermarch on Mehomia, with a view of recapturing this place if the Bulgarians had already managed to seize it. A column duly marched, and found the Bulgarians had just occupied the town and were busy pillaging it, whilst the Greek detachment (the garrison) had fallen back a couple of thousand yards to the east-south-east. The result was that the Bulgarian raiding column found itself caught under two fires, and was practically wiped out of existence. From all I can hear

quarter was neither asked nor given ; men fought until they could fight no longer and fell ; when the day was over the Greeks collected the wounded of both friend and foe, marshalled the cannons they had captured, and with a few whiffs of rifle-shot scattered the Bulgarian cavalry.

Meanwhile opposite the Greek 6th Division and the centre a far more furious battle was raging. At Semitli itself, in the main valley, the Bulgarian attack was obviously delivered only with an idea of occupying our attention ; it was against the 6th Division that the Bulgarians struck what was meant to be the decisive blow.

All through that day the ding-dong battle continued amongst the mountain peaks. It was not a real battle as we understand it in Europe ; it was rather an affair of individual companies struggling for the possession of isolated mountain peaks, and on the whole the Greeks had the better of the day.

By 4.30 the Bulgarians had fallen back some 2,500 yards, contesting every inch of the way. Victory seemed almost within the Greek grasp—it appeared as if a final charge would settle the matter, and a general advance of the Greek 6th Division, deployed in line, commenced. It must be remembered that the men were not only hungry, but they had been suffering the utmost extremes of climate amongst the mountain tops. At noon men grilled, at dawn they froze ; but notwithstanding their exhaustion the troops pressed their advantage home and attempted to oust the Bulgarians from what appeared to be their last line at the point of the bayonet. Then came perhaps the most dramatic incident in all this dramatic war. All along the lines of the Greek 6th Division the Bulgarians seemed to be in full retreat, with the Greeks a hundred yards behind or so, close on their heels. Suddenly from out of the earth, as it were, rose one solid wall stretching for close upon four miles and garnished by 15,000 fresh bayonets ; they were the men of the Bulgarian 1st Division, who had been lying up all day waiting for this opportunity. It was the most gigantic ambushade combined with counter-attack that has ever been prepared in modern warfare. To

thoroughly appreciate its effect one must remember the position of the troops against whom it was made. For five days they had been marching in disjointed sections across mountain summits; for at least twenty-four hours they had had neither water nor bread, for twelve hours they had been fighting against slightly superior odds over a villainously difficult country; the men were tired out physically and mentally; nine-tenths of them were so sleepy they could hardly move, for the frosts of the previous nights had made sleep impossible, and the fighting through all the heat of the day had taken the last ounce of vitality out of the overtried and underfed soldiery.

Imagine the picture just towards the setting of the sun, after all these hardships! With eyelids which in spite of themselves would insist on closing, the Greeks at last thought victory was within their grasp. A real definite victory they could not hope for, but they believed that at least they could drive the enemy from their immediate front, so that for a few hours they could lay them down and rest in peace. It was the last effort of dead-weary men; and just as that effort seemed to be crowned with success, just as the 5,000 (for by this time there were no more) weary ones were attaining the Bulgarian position, they suddenly found themselves face to face with an overwhelming wall of fresh troops—not only fresh troops, but the flower of the enemy's army, who had been lying "doggo" all the afternoon, waiting to pull off this gigantic coup. It was the supreme moment of trial for the Greek army. I asked myself what would happen: would it be Larissa over again—would it be just a ghastly butchery? would we all turn like sheep and run, or would we, like Baker Pasha's army, throw ourselves on our faces and, already half-asleep, await the final slumber induced by Bulgarian bayonets? Personally I was far too interested in observing the mental attitude of the soldiers about me to consider my own position; and really it was hardly worth considering, for apparently nothing short of a miracle could bring any of us out alive. I do not suppose that any reliable account of the next half-hour's fighting will ever be given, because no man could see farther than a few yards around him.

At the first onrush the Greek lines were split up into innumerable little groups, who formed, as it were, tiny islands around which the sea of Bulgarian soldiery lashed and foamed. As the minutes went by, the smaller islands were absorbed entirely, and only a heap of corpses marked where they had once stood; the larger islands grew gradually less as the casualties grew greater. Nothing but cold steel was used; there were fresh Bulgarian troops with fierce faces and savage cries, digging with their bayonets at men who were so sleepy that nine-tenths of them did not care whether they lived or died. As the slaughter grew greater, however, and men saw their comrades killed about them, a spirit of revenge arose. The men felt that if they must die they would die gamely—and thus the fight with the cold steel wore on.

Of what really happened I cannot myself speak, of course, because one could only see what was happening in one's own immediate vicinity; but it appears that three battalions of the Greek 1st Division came up and supported our left, strengthening it so that it re-formed into some semblance of a line, and succeeded in holding the Bulgarians in check. Meanwhile our right, or such of it as still existed, was being pushed back in isolated groups—that was about five o'clock. At twenty minutes past five three battalions from the 5th Division, passing round our extreme left, came upon the rear and flank of the enemy facing our left, and opened a galling enfilade fire upon the troops who were eating up our centre and our right. To us it seemed that the enemy were being attacked in the rear, and they also doubtless had the same impression. It was a master coup. For five minutes the balance of victory wavered, and it was during those five minutes that the bloodiest work of all was done.

Then at last the Bulgarian attack broke; our men of the 6th Division were so dead tired that few of them could even move five yards in pursuit of their retreating enemy, and very few shots were fired. Before the Bulgarians had got a hundred yards away the majority of the living amongst the 6th Division were asleep. It was to the two regiments of the 1st and 5th Divisions that the delight of wreaking vengeance was given, and they did

not neglect their business. By sunset all was dead quiet, not a rifle-shot to be heard, and only here and there a groan from the wounded or a cry for water.

In its small way it had been the most bloody affair of all that bloody war. Out of some 5,000 men of the 6th Division who bore the brunt of the action, barely 1,500 remained alive, but they had at least the satisfaction of burying 10,000 Bulgars next day.

Meanwhile in the centre a halting action had been fought: the Greeks did not desire to advance, and even if they had attempted to do so their initiative would have been checked by their obligation to send 6,000 reinforcements to the 6th Division. On the left also there had been some heavy fighting, though at comparatively long ranges. Above all, the Greek artillery did excellent work, and when the Bulgarian howitzer battery, which had been ensconced in the village of Semitli itself, attempted to bring its horses up, the teams were exterminated, with the result that the battery fell into Greek hands. A little farther along a very similar episode occurred. The Greek gunners had spotted a Bulgarian battery; they had got the range to a nicety of the place by which the battery must pass to get on to the road; they waited their opportunity, and it was better than they expected, for the gunners, once upon the road, waited for their escort of infantry to arrive; the infantry came up in column of fours, and then eight guns let loose upon them at about 2,000 yards range. There was a wild *sauve qui peut*, and one huge heap of mangled horses, gunners and infantrymen, guns and limbers. Nobody ever took the trouble to count them, but there must have been at least 500 men who died on that little turning by the road.

Semitli was not a battle as it is understood in military science; there was no theory about it, and with the exception of the arrival and dispositions of the last Greek reinforcements there were practically no tactics; it was just blood, murder, and sudden death, and Heaven help the man who was unlucky. With the exception of the heavy fighting carried on by our left flank, it was the last serious battle of the war.

Whether Semitli had any great effect upon the terms

of peace, or upon effecting the conclusion of peace at all, I cannot say, but one result it must have when the story comes to be generally known: Semitli has wiped out the memory of Larissa just as Ladysmith and Mafeking wiped out Majuba.

The Greek fighting man showed exactly opposite qualities at Semitli to those which had made him the scorn of Europe at Larissa. At Larissa he had run away from his own shadow; at Semitli, dead weary, dead hungry, fought out, he faced terrible odds and almost certain death, faced them cheerfully, doggedly, and eventually conquered.

CHAPTER XII

IN FRONT OF DJUMAIA

DURING the night of July 26th to 27th I rode from Livonovo back to the 6th Division, where I watched the battle described in the previous chapter throughout the day of the 27th, and then again I rode back through the mountains during the night of July 27th to 28th, until at Janikoy (the southern entrance to the Kresna Pass) I was able to hand my dispatches to a motor car, thus saving myself the weary journey to Livonovo and back : this was a piece of good luck which I thoroughly appreciated, since for two consecutive days I had been with the troops during the fighting, whilst each night I had spent in the saddle in order to get my dispatches off to my paper. On July 28th I rode north again back through the Pass, determined this time to join the Greek centre at Semitli, where I arrived very weary and received a warm welcome from my friends of the 1st Division. It was then that I heard the details of the fight they had fought at Semitli whilst I had been on the flank, and saw the captured cannon.

The next morning, July 29th, orders were given for a general advance, and the columns of the 1st and 5th Divisions moved northwards to accomplish the 15 kilometres to Djumaia. During the night our engineers had a busy time of it, for they were ordered to throw a pontoon-bridge across the Struma so as to allow the artillery of the 2nd Division to pass over to join their infantry on the left bank of the river. Through some misunderstanding they went too far forward, and when dawn broke upon their accomplished task they found their bridge under direct fire from the Bulgarian guns at Djumaia, from which place the pontoon was barely 3,000 yards distant.

At that period of the war pontoons were priceless to the Greek army, and one cannot stint one's admiration for the plucky resolve of the engineer officer to save his bridge at all costs, and thus to retrieve the error he had made in selecting the spot for his pontoon. Under an extremely heavy shell fire he turned his weary men to work to dismantle the bridge which they had just completed. The muddy waters of the filthy river fairly boiled with shell and the splash from shrapnel, but the men worked doggedly at their task. One pontoon was struck and immediately sunk, whilst another cut adrift and floated down stream on the roaring waters. Men were shot and drowned, but the remainder worked splendidly, and just as our main body reached Karasu our pontoon wagons came clattering back to us at full gallop amidst a halo of bursting shell and shrapnel, and immediately set to work to bridge the river yet again.

Our advance troops in the meantime had occupied a ridge running at right angles to the river, from whence it was possible to see Djumaia itself lying in the valley a couple of miles away; the bulk of our troops remained some two kilometres farther to the rear, in the Struma valley, whilst the artillery of the 2nd Division passed over the Struma by the new bridge on its way to support the divisions on our extreme left flank.

The following day (July 30th) the battle of Karasu continued in a disjointed fashion. Some refugees from Djumaia came in and told us that the Bulgarian troops had left the town in the hands of a few stragglers and comitadjis, who were pillaging and setting fire to the place. I was consumed with a desire to reconnoitre Djumaia and see for myself the Bulgarians at their favourite pastime, and also to have a look at our positions along the ridge. My gallant horse took me to the little valley that runs behind the ridge which the Greek troops were holding. Passing along the valley, I was enabled to visit the whole of the Greek front, now and again dismounting and climbing the 200 ft. or so up to the summit of the ridge. At that hour (about 9 a.m.) there was no firing, and save for the occasional eddies of smoke arising from burning Djumaia, the countryside looked peaceable enough, although the narrow valley

down which I rode was profusely sprinkled with the gun teams and baggage animals of the troops who held the ridge. For perhaps five kilometres or so I continued parallel to the Greek front, and then, finding a path leading towards Djumaia, I determined to have a closer look at the burning town.

The officer commanding the outpost company warned me that I was bent on a foolish errand, but I promised to take care of my skin, and struck out boldly, leaving the Greek lines behind me, but keeping a scout's eye open for Bulgarian advance posts. I was in luck, for apparently just at this point the Bulgarian line did not exist. My road lay downhill along a somewhat tricky path, and I felt that with my white horse and a white sun-helmet I must make a conspicuous object in the landscape.

At the foot of the slope a grove of fruit trees afforded cover from view, and I trotted along merrily for a kilometre until I found myself on the outskirts of the town. Some of the houses were smouldering, one or two were in full blaze, whilst the remainder were locked and barricaded. Not a soul was to be seen in the deserted street, which was partially encumbered with household rubbish and furniture. For two or three hundred yards or so I rode on unmolested, whilst mongrel dogs sneaked cringingly up side streets at my approach. At the end of the street a burning rafter from a neighbouring roof fell with a shower of sparks and frightened my horse into a gallop; before I could draw rein I had turned the corner and found myself in what I suppose was the main street of the town, which presented a very different spectacle from that which I had just left. On all sides were groups of Bulgarian soldiery in various stages of deshabille; some were carrying out pieces of furniture into the street, others were busy rifling boxes of clothing and throwing the contents broadcast; some were carrying bundles of loot, whilst others were busy setting fire to a house and were feeding the flames with mattresses and pieces of furniture.

I do not know who was the more surprised at my sudden appearance on the scene, the looters or myself. For five seconds or so, reining in my horse, I surveyed

the prospect, then an ominous movement of hands towards rifles and the click of breech-bolts warned me that this was no moment for philosophical reflection. Wheeling my horse sharply to the right, I set him at a heap of clothing and bed-gear, which he jumped in great style, and away I rushed at full speed along the main street, regardless of the groups of pillagers, who shrank away from under the very hoofs of my galloping horse. I do not know whether the shots were aimed at me, but before I could turn back again into a quiet side street dozens of rifle-shots added their noise to the tumult. It was a wild hundred yards of gallop, and then I found safety round a corner, leaving that bedlam of pillage and arson behind me, nor did I draw rein until I had left Djumaia a good thousand yards astern. I shall never forget, however, the impression of that squalid street, the half-clad soldiery wallowing in the rubbish-heaps as mongrel dogs wallow in refuse in search of some happy find.

Once safely back inside the Greek lines I took things easily, thinking that I had had enough adventure for one morning; but I was mistaken, for hardly had I got into the valley behind the Greek ridge than the Bulgarians commenced a heavy fire upon our positions. Their artillery, in attempting to range upon our troops, sent most of their shells into the narrow valley along which I was riding, and at one time the fire became so hot that I was obliged to shelter for a while under a friendly precipice of rock. When I ventured again into the open, after a quarter of an hour's rest, during which I snatched a hasty meal, the shell fire had diminished considerably, but instead I found myself riding under a shower of expended rifle-bullets. If there is one thing in warfare more disconcerting than another it is to be subjected to un-aimed long-range rifle-fire. First of all it is practically impossible to seek shelter from this, owing to the varying angles of descent taken by the bullets; but worse than this is the disquieting noise made by the bullets as they come tumbling head over heels through the air, not with the clean zip! zip! of the aimed bullet, but with the droning, shrieking sound of the expended bullet, crying, as it were, in its death-

agony. I take no shame that I galloped over the last three kilometres of that stricken valley as hard as my horse could go. Once a small splinter of shell struck him, opening a wound in his back, and he nearly unhorsed me, otherwise we came through unscathed.

And that, as it happened, was my last adventure of the war, so my friends the Bulgarians can claim that my final experience of their fire found me running away; I hope that this will be a consolation to them! Next morning I was aroused at 4 o'clock by a staff officer, who informed me that a telegram had just been received from King Constantine ordering a suspension of hostilities, as an armistice had been agreed to.

Taking the political situation into consideration, and comparing it with what I judged the military situation to be, I came to the conclusion that armistice spelt eventual peace, and that there would be no more fighting. I felt sure that King Constantine, after his recent brilliant victories, would never for a moment consent to an armistice unless he felt certain that the Bulgarians would fight no more. Urgent matters at home demanded my presence in England, as our army manœuvres had already begun, where my presence was obligatory. Taking all these facts into consideration, I made up my mind to trek southward at once, and next morning found me in Salonika, where I enticed my wife away from the hospital where she was working, and sailed for Brindisi *via* Athens. On the morning of August 8th I was being welcomed by my comrades-in-arms in an English camp. It seemed to be the depth of bathos to enter upon two months of peace manœuvres under the luxurious conditions that prevail in the British army, after ten months of real war with the Greek army in the field, but of such contrasts the life of a war correspondent is composed.

I cannot, however, say good-bye to Djumaia without recounting what is perhaps my most vivid impression of the whole campaign—that of my last meal with the Greek troops. Let it be remembered that food in Macedonia was both scarce and bad. For meat few of us had any stomach, for the stench of putrefying corpses was heavy in our nostrils throughout that God-forsaken land, and flesh was distasteful to the palate. Drink of any

kind was practically unobtainable, and when I and my friends used to forgather at meal-time with little else to eat than some stale bread and a very limited supply of peculiarly nasty water disguised by a few tea-leaves, we were wont to make light of our appetites and thirst by pretending we were about to discuss a dinner at "The Grande-Bretagne," "The Ritz" or "The Café Anglais."

We talked, as we sipped our disgusting brew of turgid tea, of the excellence of iced lemon-squash, with the ice clinking against the glass, which was to be obtained at the Club at Salonika. We would pretend that we were drinking the *Veuve Clicquot's* best, or eating the savoury *sole au vin blanc*, when in point of fact we were trying to soften a stale crust of bread in a muddy brew of tea and Struma water. So when on the evening of July 30th my jovial friend and comrade of a score of camp repasts, Dr. Antoniadis, invited me to dinner with much ostentation, I accepted with alacrity for the sake of the excellent company I knew I should find in the mess of the 2nd Regiment of Artillery, but convinced that there would be nothing to eat.

Of all the dinners I have ever eaten that dinner stands out pre-eminent. Never have I enjoyed food so much, never have I made such a pig of myself; for think, my readers! not only did we have sardines and olives, and tinned lobster *ad lib.*, but the *pièce de résistance* was fried potatoes. Potatoes, I swear it! We who had forgotten that such a thing as vegetables existed! I will not describe that orgy—that Lucullus! Those of my readers who were there will never forget it, and those who were not would never be able to realise the delight it was to eat the clean, succulent tuber! Oh, most excellent of hosts and of good fellows, Dr. Antoniadis, I give you henceforth right to call upon me whenever and wherever I be for dinners illimitable, in grateful remembrance of that potato feast we ate together within cannon-shot of Djumaia.

CHAPTER XIII

SOME OF THE BATTLES OF THE WAR

ALTHOUGH this book has no pretension to be an authentic history of the Greco-Bulgarian War, being in fact only a record of my own personal observations and peregrinations, I feel that the reader would be better able to follow the events of the campaign and appreciate the splendid successes of the Greek tactics and strategy were I to devote a chapter to the movements of the Greek army, even although I was not a personal observer of those movements. Even a war correspondent cannot be in two places at once; in offering the following accounts of battles at which I myself was not present, I have taken the utmost trouble in obtaining the impressions of officers and soldiers who were on the spot, in the hope of preserving the character of actuality which I have endeavoured to give to my narrative.

It will be noticed, with regret perhaps, that I do not mention the exploits of particular battalions, companies, batteries or of individuals; but this reticence on my part is intentional, for I feel that where all did so well it would be invidious to single out any particular unit for praise just because the work of that particular unit happens to have come to my notice; doubtless when the official history of the war is published by the general staff of the Greek army due justice will be done to all units and individuals who distinguished themselves in this glorious campaign.

THE ACTION OF KILINDIR-DOYRAN (JULY 5TH AND 6TH)

In an earlier chapter (Chapter III) I have described how the Greek army, after capturing the Bulgarian entrenchments at Kilkis, pushed on towards the lake of

Doyran and made themselves masters of the railway line which constituted the Bulgarian main line of communication; but some further details will doubtless be welcomed by those of my readers who took part in those two days of desperate fighting under an almost tropical sun, or who are students of military history.

To the north of Kilkis the railway line passes over an undulating expanse of arid country which rises gradually to the village and heights of Yannès. Along this ridge the Bulgarians had thrown some 15,000 troops who had been brought by train from Tchataldja, and who had detrained at Doyran and at Kilindir early on the morning of July 5th. Marching to the sound of the cannon that were belching over the battlefield of Kilkis, these troops had reached Yannès when they began to encounter the Bulgarian fugitives from the battle. The Bulgarian general had barely time to throw his men into formation when the advancing Greek columns flung themselves upon him. Flushed with victory at Kilkis, there was no withstanding the impetuous onrush of the Greek infantry. The Bulgarian soldiers had already had their morale shaken by watching the flight of their own beaten army, and moreover they must have felt most anxious about their right flank, which was being driven in by the Greek 10th Division. The resistance about Yannès was short-lived; almost before the Greek columns had shaken out their lines and brought the weight of their artillery to bear, the Bulgarian line wavered and broke, falling back in disorder towards Kalinovo and Kilindir.

The Greek infantry never wavered for an instant in the impetuosity of their attack, but followed hot-foot upon the Bulgarian retreat. Later they were materially assisted by a series of brilliant cavalry charges. When night at last cast her discreet mantle upon this bloody day, the Greeks had occupied Kalinovo and Kilindir, whilst two divisions on the right, sweeping all opposition aside, had made a forced march due north towards the heights of Dova-tépé, threatening to turn the Bulgarian right as well as to cut the railway line between Doyran and Demir-Hissar.

That night General Sarafof made a last effort to stem the advancing tide of Greek success. Gathering under

his orders all the troops on whom he could lay hands—the reserve from Doyran, the remnants of the 15,000 from Yannès, together with the remnants of the troops who had been beaten at Kilkis—he entrenched himself in a semicircle with his left resting on the Dova-Tépé heights, his right stretching past Bogdantsa to the railway line a little to the north of Ghevgheli. If only the Greeks would have given him a couple of days' breathing-space he could have hoped to have retained some of his stores and to have withdrawn his army into the Strumitza valley. But the Greeks were not to be baulked of their prey. Early on the morning of July 6th the relentless onward movement of the Greek army recommenced. The sun had not reached its zenith ere the two divisions on the Greek extreme right had flung themselves upon the Bulgarian entrenchments in the defiles of Dova-Tépé, and, carrying all before them, hurled their adversaries aside. Some fled eastward toward Demir-Hissar, the remainder westward to Doyran; just as water divides under the bows of the onrushing ship as she ploughs her way across the ocean, so did the Bulgarian left divide before the onslaught of the Greek right.

In the centre, however, the Bulgarians, thanks to the tremendous cannonade kept up by their artillery, managed for a couple of hours to hold the Greek advance in check; but gradually, as battery after battery of Greek guns unlimbered and came into action, the Bulgarian gunners found discretion the better part of valour. Time and time again their batteries were forced to change position under the extraordinarily well-directed fire of the Greek artillery. At last they abandoned the hopeless contest (for the Bulgarian gunner is no match for the Greek).

The moment the Bulgarian shell-fire slackened, the redoubtable Greek infantry were pushing forward once more; as the long lines (which stretched for close upon fifteen kilometres) got within decisive range of the Bulgarian infantry, they poured in an overwhelming rifle-fire until the enemy were seen to waver; then was heard the click of bayonets being fixed, and the Greek lines rose to the assault. Their enemy did not await their coming, but turned and fled, leaving their trenches, their

dead and their wounded to welcome the Greek charge. Many of the wounded continued to fire upon the Greeks until the last moment, and were then very naturally bayoneted. It is on such slender grounds as these that the Bulgarians base their slanders on the Greek soldiery, accusing them of killing wounded men. If wounded men desire to be treated as such they should cease to resist.

The battle of Doyran had lasted seven hours when darkness mercifully came to cover the Bulgarian flight. The Greeks marched into Doyran that night and took possession of vast quantities of war material at the railway station, amounting to over a thousand tons of foodstuffs and luxuries. On the battlefield itself twelve Bulgarian guns fell into the hands of the victors. Had the Greek army possessed a brigade of cavalry, it is probable that the Bulgarian retreat from Doyran would have developed into a *sauve qui peut* similar to their retreat from Lachanas. In that case it would have been a catastrophe of the first magnitude, and the whole history of the war might well have been changed; Bulgaria might have been forced to sue for peace before ever the Roumanians or the Turks had commenced their forward movements.

However, there is no use in sighing over lost opportunities unless it is that the lesson of Doyran may cause the Greek staff to meditate seriously upon the advisability of including two or three brigades of mounted infantry in their war establishments. I specify mounted infantry in preference to cavalry for several reasons which to me seem conclusive. There are few horses in Greece, and very few of the Greek conscripts are horsemen; moreover it has been found practically impossible to train a cavalryman in two years. Again, the country in which a Greek army will be asked to operate is seldom suitable to cavalry action, nor is the country able to support horses and to keep them fit for service. To feed the horses of three brigades of cavalry would immensely increase the already enormous difficulty of supply. On the other hand the infantryman can be trained to mounted infantry duties in a few weeks. Those who lack imagination, or who are wedded to appearances, may laugh at

my idea, but I would urge that the Greek mounted infantry should be mounted on mountain ponies and mules. The English, Egyptian and Indian soldier does not scorn to ride a camel or an elephant; there is no reason why the Greek mounted infantryman should not be content to bestride those exceedingly practical beasts—the mountain pony and the mule. They are cheap to buy, and can scrape a living on the barest countryside.

THE BATTLE OF STRUMNITZA

The Greek infantry, however, was determined to do what it could to make up for the lack of mounted troops. Next morning (July 7th) at daybreak, the long columns were pushing indefatigably forward once more in pursuit of their elusive foe.

In another chapter I have shown how the Divisions of the Greek right in this area of war climbed over the Belesch mountains in their anxiety to cut in on the flank of the Bulgarian retreat, whilst the two divisions of the Greek left pushed on towards Strumnitza itself, through the only pass in the Belesch mountains.

There is an axiom of warfare which has seldom, if ever, been found at fault: it is that once the enemy has been got on the run he should be followed immediately and persistently if the full fruits of victory are to fall to the pursuers. Even a breathing-space of an hour or two will give him time and opportunity to throw off a rear-guard to bar pursuit. The better the discipline and the morale of the defeated army, the sooner he may be expected to turn at bay and face his foe again. We may well imagine how King Constantine and his staff, bearing in mind this axiom, must have fretted through the night of July 6th to 7th at their inability to carry on the pursuit through the night. We can imagine the flying Bulgarians listening intently for the thud of pursuing hoofs as they streamed northward through the darkness. We can imagine them, as hour succeeded hour, gradually slackening the speed of their flight, slowly regaining confidence, until after thirty kilometres of marching they felt themselves safe in the narrow pass. Here they were met by a contingent of fresh troops who had come down

from Istib through Strumnitza, and thus reinforced, the Bulgarian general rallied some twenty-five battalions drawn from the 3rd and 4th Bulgarian Divisions, and detailed them as a rearguard to check the Greek advance.

The position taken up by this rearguard was extremely strong, resting as it did upon the well-nigh inaccessible crests of mountains varying in height from 2,500 to 5,000 ft. The positions of the guns detailed with the force were carefully selected. As dawn broke, the Bulgarians, having made the best of their positions, lay down and slept, awaiting the advent of the Greek advance.

As the sun began to disperse the mountain vapours of the night the weary Greek army could be seen coming on in two long dense columns, the one by the main road, the other (the 10th Division) farther to the westward, through the difficult mountain track leading from Houdovo, passing near the village of Papasevo. By midday the Greek line of battle had flung itself across the mountain gorges and rocky summits. Then the musketry fight commenced. The Bulgarian gunners pounded away at the advancing lines, and the Greek gunners could give their comrades but poor support, for they could find no suitable positions. All afternoon the stolid Greek infantry endured an inferno of Bulgarian shell and shrapnel fire, the while they climbed like flies on a wall up the steep mountain sides, but drawing nearer and ever nearer to the Bulgarian positions. Three Greek batteries had managed to come into action, and these did their best to keep the enemy's artillery fire down, but the task was too heavy for them. The Bulgarian positions were too well chosen and their artillery too numerous.

All through the night the action went on. The Greeks had, in places, got within 350 yards of the Bulgarian lines, and the opposing infantry fired at the flash of one another's rifles in the darkness. But the Greek artillery employed the night in getting new batteries into positions which they had selected by daylight. As dawn came up the Greek guns thundered out a greeting, and the infantry fixed bayonets with the comfortable knowledge that they would soon be called upon to use them. During the night the Bulgarians had withdrawn a portion of their

rearguard, trusting overmuch in the natural strength of their position. This confidence was misplaced. The Evzone Division (the 10th), working its way through the tortuous gorges to the westward, gradually turned the Bulgarian right, whilst in the centre Greek cannon rendered the Bulgarian positions untenable, and then the same old story was enacted. The Greek infantry rose to the charge, the Bulgarian defence crumpled, and turned. The Greek army swept victoriously into Strumnitza, capturing 9 cannon and 2,000 prisoners, whilst another detachment on the right, consisting of one battalion and a mountain battery, attacked a retreating column of the enemy and captured five guns. The next day (July 9th) the Greek and Serbian armies joined hands in Strumnitza.

I cannot refrain from drawing the attention of military students to the work accomplished by the five divisions which composed the left and centre of the Greek army during the week ending July 8th, 1913.

Here we have a force of some 60,000 combatants fighting and pursuing a force which was never inferior and frequently superior in numbers, and invariably fighting in positions of its own selection. On July 2nd, 3rd and 4th was fought the battle of Kilkis, on the 5th the battles of Yennès and Kilindir, on the 6th Doyran, on the 7th and 8th Strumnitza. During the seven days the Greek troops had not only fought a pitched battle every day, but had actually progressed some 60 kilometres. They had received no reinforcements, whilst their adversaries were four times reinforced (at Kilkis, Yennès, Doyran and Strumnitza) by entirely fresh troops, amounting in all to close upon 35,000—that is to say more than half the total of the original Greek combatants. The Greek losses amounted to almost a quarter of the total number of troops engaged; for seven consecutive nights and days the troops practically had neither food, sleep nor rest; men just ate what they could find and slept when they could.

That is a record so incredible that it appeals not only to the student of military history, but also to the student of human nature and of human psychology. However much praise we rightly give to King Constantine and his

staff for the splendid conception and unfaltering execution of the plan of campaign, the ultimate and supreme praise must be given to the individual Greek soldier. No words of mine can paint my admiration of the spirit he displayed, of the deeds of courage and endurance he accomplished. In years to come, when the name of Constantine the Conqueror has passed into history, and has become a legend wherewith to encourage patriotism and glory, let not posterity be forgetful of the 60,000 nameless heroes who made those first victories possible. To King Constantine all admiration is due as a noble king, as a brilliant general and as a man; but to the soldiers who made his victories possible something even more is due. They were neither kings nor generals, but they proved themselves more than men—they were superhuman in their endurance.

BATTLES OF DEMIR-HISSAR (JULY 9TH AND 10TH),
VRUNDI (JULY 15TH), AND NEVROKOP (JULY 18TH)

Just as Kilkis, Kilindir, Doyran and Strumnitza formed a series of battles during which the Greek left and centre pushed on to a new geographical alignment, so also the three battles whose names head this paragraph form a series of engagements whose object was to prolong the new geographical alignment and to throw upon the Bulgarian commander-in-chief the onus of changing his lines of communications.

The track which runs eastward from Doyran through Porroia and Hadji Beylik to the river Struma passes between two precipitous mountain ranges—the Kara Dagħ on the south and the Beles Mountains to the north. Throughout its length the valley is little wider than a mere gorge, until near the eastern extremity it widens out to a marshy plain through which the Struma cuts a sluggish and twisted course. The western extremities of the mountains were occupied by the Greek left army at the battle of Doyran on July 6th, on the 9th the Greek right army flung forward the 1st and 6th Divisions against the Bulgarian troops in the valley and those entrenched on the Beles (or Balch) Mountains across the valley.

The Bulgarian main lines extended over some nine

kilometres about Vitrina, where the Struma River forces its way through the Beles Mountains and crosses the level marshland. Here four pieces of heavy artillery (10·5 centimetres, 4·2 inch) were located. The Bulgarian flanks extended to the westward as far as Porroia and to the south-eastward along the banks of the Struma. The Greek 7th Division, with its centre at Orliako, secured the Greek right. The opposing combatant forces numbered some 30,000 Bulgarians and some 27,000 Greeks, the Bulgarians having possession of the high ground.

During July 9th, despite the heavy fire of the enemy, the Greek centre pushed forward towards Vetrina, but for lack of artillery support was unable to make much headway. On the left a column of Evzones with two mountain guns cleared the enemy out of Porroia, and pushing forward irresistibly, eventually reached Dunir Capon, the summit of the Beles ridge, 4,900 ft. high, thus turning the Bulgarian left, commanding the Strumnitza valley beyond, and establishing touch with the right flank of the main Greek army.

During the night the Greeks succeeded in bringing up their artillery, and the dawn heralded in a mighty duel between the Greek field-pieces and the Bulgarian heavy battery. At 9.30 a.m. the Greek infantry began its forward movement; soon after the Bulgarians abandoned their positions, and, crossing to the left bank of the Struma, destroyed a span of the railway bridge, thus checking the pursuit. Whilst the Greek army beat up-stream in the hope of finding a ford by which to pass the 160 yards of river, which here flows at eight miles an hour in its anxiety to reach the plain, the Bulgarian army, fearful of having its retreat cut off, made away to the eastward, seeking safety in the mountains. On their way, however, the Bulgarians found time to burn the town of Demir-Hissar and to massacre all the Greek inhabitants whom they could find. That night the Greeks crossed the Struma and took possession of the smouldering ruins of the town, where they captured the four pieces of heavy artillery and a vast quantity of war material. Meanwhile on the Greek left wing twenty cannon had fallen as spoil to the victors.

But the importance of Demir-Hissar does not lie in the number of cannon captured, but rather in the strategic position now attained by the Greek armies. The Bulgarians had been driven back into the mountain passes, without any hopes of again invading the fertile plains of Macedon. Henceforth they could at best only hope to extricate their beaten and disjointed forces. In ten days all hope of victory had been taken from them. Out-fought, out-manceuvred and beaten, they slunk northward to their own frontiers, leaving behind them a shambles of massacred villagers to show where their armies had passed. Hot on the heels of their retreat followed the Greek 7th Division.

VRUNDI AND NEVROKOP

Whilst the 7th Division pushed northwards through Serres a detachment of the Greek 8th Division, who, coming from Epirus, had occupied Cavalla and Drama, pressed forward direct upon Nevrokop, driving in front of it the Bulgarian garrisons along the Nestor River. From Serres to Vrundi the mountain paths offered every conceivable difficulty to the forward movement of the 7th Division, but when their foe faced them on July 15th they forgot their fatigues and fought with all the fury and spirit which they had displayed in their earlier battles. After ten hours of futile resistance the Bulgarian defence broke down, nor did it rally again until on July 18th the two retreating Bulgarian columns met at Nevrokop and turned once again to risk battle with their pursuers.

On both sides the action was fought with fury. The Bulgarians, animated by the courage of despair, fought better perhaps than they had ever fought before; but the Greeks were not to be denied the fruits of their pitiless toils across trackless mountain crests. The task before them was to break down the enemy's resistance and to occupy Nevrokop. It took them six hours' solid, bitter fighting, but at the end they achieved their purpose. As night fell the flying Bulgarian columns deserted their positions, and the victorious Greeks marched through the town and followed relentlessly in pursuit.

Ere the fugitives could give their pursuers the slip, the Greeks had captured no less than thirty cannon and a large number of prisoners.

Had the Bulgarians been wise, this is the moment they would have chosen to sue for peace. Victory was no longer possible for them, but rather than admit themselves defeated by the Greek army, they preferred to wait until the advance of the Turks and Roumanians made ignominious defeat inevitable.

CHAPTER XIV

THE KING AND HIS GENERALS

ALTHOUGH it may savour somewhat of impertinence to attempt to give a character-sketch of men who will undoubtedly read what I am about to write, men whom I know personally and whose friendship and courtesy to myself I esteem, I feel sure that they will pardon any liberties I may take in describing their personality and the impression they made upon my mind, when they recollect that these character-sketches are not written with any idea of personal flattery or criticism, but rather with the idea of giving the historian of the future some pencil-sketch on which to work, and with the hope of giving to the Greeks throughout the world some personal impressions of the men who led their armies to victory.

KING CONSTANTINE

It was in the late summer of 1898 that I had the honour of first being presented to His Majesty. It so happened that I was staying with my sister at the time when King Constantine (then Crown Prince) was a guest in her house. I recall the incident because at the time His Royal Highness was the most maligned man in Europe. The disastrous war of 1897 had made a vivid impression upon my mind. I had read with avidity all the published histories thereof, most of which were unflattering to the royal commander-in-chief. Apparently there was not a single war correspondent with the Greek army in 1897 who had enough perspicacity or military intelligence to know on whose shoulders to lay the blame for that disastrous campaign. The shoulders of the Crown Prince were broad enough, and so on them were

accumulated all the calumnies and innuendoes. Those shoulders never shirked their burden, and if there is one thing more than another in which King Constantine has a claim upon the admiration of the world it is for the way in which he took the whole blame for the faults of his subordinates.

It is not to be wondered at that I was curious as to the personality of the Crown Prince, of whom I had heard so much. I had not been in his presence half an hour before I knew that he had been maligned. That this great manly soldier, with the firm jaw, broad forehead and bright steel-blue eyes, could be a coward was absurd! How could a man with a jaw like that be lacking in determination, or that broad forehead bespeak incompetency? Such were my impressions after our first meeting. I recollect that before I went to bed that night I read through again, and annotated, a book dealing with the 1897 campaign. I remember writing the phrase: "Some mystery here; I fancy the Prince is allowing himself to be made the scapegoat of the war. Looks every inch a soldier, and a competent and determined one at that."

Fourteen years later I saw him again, fresh from his victorious campaign against the Turks in Macedonia, and I knew that my first impression had been correct, but had done but scant justice to the Prince. I do not know if I am right in my surmise, but I like to think of the soldier-prince during those long intervening years perfecting his military education, his chin growing yearly more determined, with the fixed purpose of proving to the world how wrongly the Greek army and himself had been misjudged by their critics.

King Constantine, like all great soldiers, is distinguished by a great simplicity of character. It is not your versatile diplomatist or your ingenious politician who can lead an army to victory. To be a great soldier requires a straightforward character, a great determination, a great confidence in oneself and in one's men. These have been the attributes of all great soldiers, from Alexander the Great to Stonewall Jackson. Simplicity of life, of thought, of speech, of action. Such are the attributes of King Constantine. Add to these a great enthusiasm, and a degree of determination which almost amounts to ob-

stinacy. Such is the stern stuff of which soldiers are made.

For fear of being personal I will not enlarge upon His Majesty's other characteristics, but those who know him best will remember his frank and open manner, his ever-ready smile, his modesty and simplicity. In my mind I sometimes compare him with the other European monarch whose personality so deeply impresses all who know him and all who have read about him—the Kaiser. The Kaiser is a versatile genius; King Constantine is a brilliant general. The Kaiser has learnt the value of self-advertisement, but the King of Greece needs no advertisement to call attention to his merits. The Kaiser is the Emperor of the German Empire—King Constantine is the servant of Greece. Let Greece never forget how well he has served her !

GENERAL DUZMANIS : CHIEF OF THE GENERAL STAFF

I should imagine that General Duzmanis is his own worst enemy. He always gives me the impression of being on his guard ; of being a pessimist. He is a man of boundless energy and capacity for work, with a clear and rapidly-working brain. If King Constantine supplied the horse-power that drove the Greek Army through Macedonia, I feel convinced that it was his chief of staff who acted as the brake on the wheel when difficult places were to be crossed ; General Duzmanis, I should imagine, is a man of absolutely immutable temperament, whether it be in victory or in defeat ; his brain would still go on minutely and mechanically working out every detail, leaving nothing to chance, making all sure, carrying out his plans with supreme sangfroid and supreme disregard for either the criticism or the approbation of those about him.

It is seldom that General Duzmanis permits himself the luxury of a smile, but when he does one cannot but regret that he does not do so more often. It was at one of those rare moments when the General smiled that I came to the conclusion that, however difficult it might be to win the friendship of this austere soldier, that friendship, once won, would be loyal and self-sacrificing to the

utmost degree. It is such a friendship, I believe, that the General has given to his King, and that, combined with his undoubted military genius, has rendered him such a valuable chief of staff. One of the axioms of war is to endeavour to fathom the character of the opposing general. It is just possible that General Ivanoff imagined that he had taken King Constantine's measure, but he forgot the King's chief of staff. It would take a far more brilliant man than Ivanoff to fathom the mind of General Duzmanis; of all the soldiers I have ever met, with the solitary exception of Lord Kitchener, General Duzmanis is the last man I would care to have as an opposing commander.

GENERAL MANOUSSOYANNAKIS: COMMANDING THE GREEK RIGHT

Tall and imposing in figure, with clear-cut features and massive chin, General Manoussoyannakis impresses one rather as a general of the German school. Slow in his movements, slow I should imagine in his mental activities, he is the sort of man who could be relied upon to make no mistake, to blunder into no false position. I have stood beside the general at the battle of Karasu, when Bulgarian shells were falling around us somewhat unpleasantly. The General never so much as blinked an eye—in fact I rather doubt if he even heard them (for he is slightly deaf)—but he certainly gave no signs of being aware that he was under fire. He was at the moment deeply occupied in thinking out his next move. He walked slowly out of the danger zone, slowly he made his decision as to his next move, and then he dismissed all such matters from his mind whilst he gave instructions to his orderly for the feeding of his horse.

The General has certainly one great quality which is almost essential to a successful general—that of making things easy for the officers of his staff. Everything with him was cut and dried. There were never any unnecessary fusses, no issue of orders to be countermanded later. All went as regularly as clockwork. I wonder if it would be possible to arouse the General to a state of excitement. I doubt it. As a conscientious, painstaking

and absolutely dependable general, Manoussoyannakis has few equals in the Greek army. He deserves the confidence of his superiors, and he certainly wins that of his subordinates.

GENERAL MOSCHOPOULOS: COMMANDING THE 4TH
DIVISION

Of all the Greek senior officers whom I have met General Moschopoulos reminds me most of the type one encounters in the British Army. He is essentially a fighting general, he dearly loves a scrap, and we know that even he must have had almost as much as he wanted in the course of the two recent wars. I may be doing the General an injustice unwittingly, but I doubt if he has sufficient restraint to ever achieve unqualified success as an independent commander, for I fancy that his zeal might outweigh his caution, and that he might commit the army under his command to engagements out of which it might not be easy to extricate them at will. He certainly possesses, however, the sacred fire of enthusiasm; he is quick at seeing an opportunity—so quick, indeed, that I fear he might seize it before it was quite ripe. As a Divisional Commander he was an unqualified success, and inspired the love and admiration of all under his orders. Recklessly brave himself, he never asked of others what he himself was not ready to perform.

Should Greece have to fight another war, I feel sure that fate has laurels in store for General Moschopoulos. He possesses most of the attributes of a great general: a quick understanding, a fiery energy, a ready grasp of a situation, a sound military knowledge: he lacks perhaps the spirit of caution, the detailed reasoning of the didactic mind, but a carefully selected chief of staff could supply those qualities if they are really lacking. But above all things, General Moschopoulos is a leader of men. He led his division to victory through a dozen bitterly-contested fights in Epirus and Macedonia, and I am convinced that he would be only too delighted to lead them through a dozen more. Certainly he would lead and they would follow so long as he remained alive.

GENERAL KALLARIS: COMMANDING THE 2ND DIVISION

To all the senior officers of the Greek Army the war has brought golden opportunities of distinguishing themselves, honour and promotion. To me it seems that General Kallaris, although perhaps the one who has done most, has reaped the least reward. His son was sacrificed upon the altar of duty that sad day at Manoliassa. The General bowed his head in sorrow, but not for one hour did he allow his private grief to interfere with the energy that he devoted to his duty. Again for two short days in Epirus it seemed as if Kallaris' chance to distinguish himself had come, for he assumed supreme command in Epirus; his *Ordre du Jour* gave promise for the future, and abundant evidence of capacity for organisation and thought. But it was not to be. With the arrival of the Crown Prince he reverted to the rank of Divisional Commander once more.

As Commander of the Division that garrisoned Salonika on that fateful 1st of July he displayed a capacity for detail worthy of all admiration and a fiery energy tempered by a wise and humane restraint. Throughout the war he led the 2nd Division, which is the pride of Athens and bears an unequalled record in all three campaigns. A loyal and conscientious subordinate, there can be little doubt that Kallaris would make an equally capable independent commander, but fortune has not yet given him that opportunity. When it comes he will know how to use it—such is my impression of the man.

COLONEL SOTILLIS: COMMANDING 7TH DIVISION

Until May 1913 the wags of the Greek Army referred to the newly-created 7th Division as the "smokeless Division," for it had not hitherto had the good luck to take part in a battle. It was a gibe that stung, but the first time the new regiments faced the Bulgarians in the Pangheion region, they gave ample proof of their fighting power. It is greatly to the credit of their General that this Division, created in haste out of the surplus of other divisions, should have in so short a time attained homogeneity and a spirit of unity. Obviously Sotillis is an organiser of no mean order. Occupying the

most dangerous position on the extreme Greek right, much depended on the wisdom of his tactical dispositions. These were as faultless as they could be expected to be under the very difficult circumstances in which he found himself placed.

When his detachments in the Pangheion region and at Nigritta were attacked in overwhelming force, he showed evidence of a great moral courage when he gave the order for their retreat. The details of those simultaneous retirements were conceived as faultlessly as they were executed. No mean task this at the commencement of a campaign to retire through a wilderness of mountains in face of overwhelming odds. Then at the psychic moment he turned at bay (at Maslar), struck vigorously at one of the opposing columns, crushed it, and pursued it relentlessly. In another chapter I criticise the commander of the 7th Division for not pushing forward on July 6th, fording the Struma and occupying Serres. It is more than probable that his hands were tied by orders from a higher source.

In personality Sotillis is the embodiment of the cultured gentleman; deservedly popular amongst the officers of his staff, he has their entire confidence. Even at a critical moment of the campaign, when he had just received unexpected orders for a flank march, he still found time to go out of his way to show me personal courtesy, and to take thought for my comfort. This argues that he is possessed of a sangfroid and a capacity for detail without which no general can attain success. Sotillis is one of the coming men in the Greek Army.

GENERAL DANGLIS: COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF IN EPIRUS

Although, strictly speaking, General Danglis took no part in the Greco-Bulgarian war, I feel that character-sketches of the Greek generals whom I have met would not be complete without a portrait of this veteran warrior. Small and dapper in appearance, he reminds one of Lord Roberts; the piercing eye and broad brow denote the soldier and the student, and we understand that the brains which designed the Schneider-Danglis mountain gun—by far the finest piece of mountain artillery in the world—

are as active now as they were before the hair on the temples became silvered by the advancing years. It is not for me to say why General Danglis was sent to Epirus instead of remaining as Chief of Staff; perhaps it was that King Constantine knew that he could rely implicitly upon the unquestioning and ungrumbling loyalty of his veteran general—a confidence that was not misplaced.

Although Danglis had no public share in the laurels culled upon the battle-fields of Macedonia in the second war, nobody knows better than his royal master how much he owes to the unselfishness of General Danglis, who, despite the critical state of affairs on the Albanian frontier, denuded himself of division after division and sent them to cull the laurels which he himself could not hope to gather.

It is a sad picture that I have in my mind of this quiet, thoughtful soldier, with the love of battle shining through his eyes, working uncomplainingly in distant Epirus, stripping the country of its garrisons to send to his royal master, devising new units to replace them, reading in the papers accounts of the great battles and startling victories. It is perhaps the last campaign that General Danglis will see, and he was obliged to see it from afar. His past record tells us how eagerly he must have craved to have been in the very thick of the fighting. But, like the soldier that he is, he remained steadfast and uncomplaining at his uncongenial post. Let the General console himself with the thought that forms the motto of the Prince of Wales and say to himself, "I, also, have served."



M. VENIZELOS : THE GREEK PREMIER.

CHAPTER XV

THE MILITARY AND POLITICAL ASPECTS OF THE WAR

HITHERTO I have but written of the things which I have seen with my own eyes ; even a war correspondent cannot be omnipresent, but even when he is not seeing things or writing of the things that he has seen, or galloping with his dispatches to the nearest telegraph-office, he should fill in his time by thinking out the military and political problems of the moment, for it is only thus that he can hope to give due value to feats of arms accomplished, and arrange to be present at the next important engagement. I myself in Macedonia spent many weary hours in the saddle, but I spent even more hours studying the map and working out the political and strategical problems which we had to solve. As a soldier myself not unaccustomed to studying such problems, perhaps the solutions which I arrived at will not be devoid of interest to the public, and such criticisms as I may permit myself to make will be taken in good part, for it must be remembered that it is the disinterested onlooker who " sees most of the game," and that the player who has nothing at stake can usually give the soundest advice.

In view of the splendid successes achieved by the Greek army and King Constantine, any remarks of mine may seem invidious ; but nobody appreciates those victories more than I myself do, and if I place on record my own personal deductions from time to time, it is through no desire to criticise, but rather to help the military student of the future to appreciate at its full worth this marvellous campaign.

The Bulgarians, thanks chiefly to the misrepresentations of General Hessaptchieff (whom the Greeks should

look upon henceforth as their best friend), were under the delusion that the Greek army need hardly be considered. Their plan of campaign, so far as I can divine it, was to oppose their chief strength to the Serbians in Macedonia and, whilst holding the Serbian frontier with their right wing, to cripple the Greek army by a rapid movement of their left wing upon Salonika. After taking this city, they no doubt fancied that the Greeks would withdraw beyond the Vardar and give them little further trouble.

The weakness of the Bulgarian position was the lines of communication, for the only railway line to the Greek front ran *via* Adrianople to Serres, within striking distance of the sea, and thence almost parallel with the Greek positions to Doyran and Ghevgheli. The roadway down the Struma valley was insufficient to feed and replenish the necessary army, whilst the railway line was obviously a vulnerable point. The Bulgarians hoped to solve the problem by creating large depots of war material at Doyran and at Demir-Hissar, protecting the former by a fortified camp at Kilkis, and the latter by strongly garrisoning the naturally strong positions about Lachanas. The Bulgarians, doubtless, felt that with these supplies assured they could afford to risk having the railway cut between Serres and Dedeagatch, should the Greeks succeed in landing a sea-borne expedition along the coast, and that is doubtless why the railway line was only lightly held by reserve troops of inferior morale and training.

From the Bulgarian point of view the essential was to sever the communications between the Greeks and Serbians at Ghevgheli, to isolate the Pangheion region by a rapid advance southward through Nigritta, and then to gradually press back the Greek centre until Salonika was reached. This was, as a matter of fact, the plan which the Bulgarians attempted to accomplish.

Regarded from the Greek standpoint the two salient features of the situation were the predominance of the Greek navy and the retention of Salonika. So long as this city could be held and the Greek navy continued to hold undisputed domination of the coast, there was nothing to fear. Any pressure upon Salonika could be

relieved by a naval raid upon Cavalla, Serres or Dedeagatch, or even a threatened movement against Adrianople itself. As in the Turkish campaign, the Greek navy was the trump card from a strategical point of view. But although the Navy insured Greece against ignominious defeat, it could not promise her victory, nor could it assure the political and military co-operation of the Greek and Serbian armies. The task of the Greek Headquarters staff was therefore to assure this co-operation, and at the same time to rescue as many Greek inhabitants as possible from the fury of Bulgarian revenge.

Two plans were feasible: (1) to hold the line of the Vardar, fortify Salonika and hold a striking force available for maritime expeditions against the Bulgarian lines of communication; or (2) to boldly assume the offensive, and marching inland with one flank supported by the fleet, the other by the Serbian left, strike vigorously at the Bulgarian centre and endeavour to destroy his supply depots at Doyran and Demir-Hissar. It was the bolder alternative that King Constantine adopted, as being more in consonance with the morale of his troops; the Greek fights better in attack than when acting on the defensive.

The Greek successes at Lachanas and Kilkis created a new strategical position. Had they been wise, the Bulgarians would have broken off these battles before they developed into decisive defeats and fallen back upon the line Strumitza—the Strumitza—Demir-Hissar—the Struma, to Serres—Lake Achenas—and the Sea—abandoning Doyran, it is true, but feeding the right of their army from Djumaia and the left by the railway line from Dedeagatch. Even on the afternoon of July 4th (N.S.) it was not too late for them to have adopted this plan and to have invited European intervention. Instead they elected to burn Kilkis and Nigritta and to massacre wholesale all Greeks who fell into their hands.

When one considers these massacres and endeavours to assign a reason for them other than the innate bestiality of the perpetrators it is just possible to find a political reason for the Bulgarian action. Supposing the Bulgarians hoped to come victoriously out of the

war, they would naturally wish to discourage all thought of Greek reprisals for at least one generation; they desired to impress the inhabitants of the region with the horrors of war, and it must be admitted they succeeded in this effort, but they miscalculated two important factors: the possibility of defeat, and the effect which the sight of the massacred victims would have upon the morale of the Greek soldiery.

If the Bulgarians had had a general of military genius he would by the night of July 3rd (N.S.) have realised this fundamental error of the Bulgarian strategy. He would have withdrawn his troops behind the Struma, given orders to conciliate the inhabitants, disavowed previous excesses, and reorganised his lines of communication whilst he entrenched new positions. Such a man was not forthcoming, and the battles of Kilkis and Lachanas and the massacre at Nigritta sealed the fate of the Bulgarian arms in Macedonia.

It is easy to criticise generals in the field when one is sitting in an armchair after the war is over, but even at the time I failed to appreciate the reasons of the Greek pursuit towards Strumitza and across the Beles Mountains. If it had been possible for the Greek artillery to negotiate these mountains, there would have been great possibilities in such a move, the object of which was to stampede the Bulgarian retreat. At the time I believed that equally good results could have been achieved by leaving the 3rd and 10th Divisions to gradually follow the Bulgarian retreat towards Doyran and Strumitza, whilst the remainder of the army could have made a forced march eastwards toward Hadji Baylik, Demir Hissar, and Serres.¹ Such a movement would have not only arrived at Petritsi before the Bulgarians and thus cut them off entirely from the Struma valley, but would have cut the Bulgarian army in two and

¹ Since writing the above the author has had the opportunity of an interview with His Majesty King Constantine. His Majesty told me that his original intention had been to carry out the plan suggested by me on this page, but owing to the representations from the Serbian Headquarters, who were anxious to secure an immediate junction with the Greek army at Strumnitsa, King Constantine felt himself obliged to move directly on that town in force, and the movements over the Beles Mountains were in the nature of a compromise between the original plan and the plan adopted.

obliged the Serres and Drama troops to have retired towards Adrianople with one flank ever exposed to an oversea expeditionary force. Such a movement might have been a bit risky for the Greeks, but it would have been infinitely more disconcerting for the Bulgarians since the Greek army would have had an absolutely free road to Sofia *via* Djumaia and Dubnitza.

Of the delay between July 11th and 16th in pushing up the Struma valley I have already spoken elsewhere. It was at this moment also that the political outlook took a new aspect when Turkey, braving the displeasure of Europe, offered an alliance to Greece. The goodwill or displeasure of Europe appears to be so ephemeral and to count for so little that M. Venezelos need hardly have taken those factors into account. The Turkish arguments were wonderfully correct. "The European Powers," said Turkey, "are so jealous of each other and withal so afraid of coming to loggerheads that they will never have the courage to take concerted action or the confidence to give to any individual Power a mandate to interfere. Their one idea is the preservation of peace, and they are not likely to go to war in order to preserve a peace of their own dictation. They will threaten and make naval demonstrations and blockades, they will even mobilise, but they will not draw the sword because they do not know against whom they might be obliged to use it before they get an opportunity of sheathing it again. Wherefore," quoth Turkey, "I will go on my own way." The way she selected led her victoriously to Adrianople.

Doubtless Greek politics were influenced by the desire of Roumania to establish peace at the bayonet's point. Had Greece and Serbia accepted the Turkish proposal, Roumania would doubtless have changed her views, and probably the Treaty of Peace which would have been signed at Sofia would have abolished Bulgaria off the map of Europe. Greece would have gained little more than she has actually got, and the sight of Serbia and Greece making alliance with their former enemy the Turk would have gone far to sicken the remaining sympathies of Christian Europe. Personally, however, I cannot but feel that the "Christian" Europe of to-day

is a hypocritical myth, whose sympathy is to be bought, and is hardly worth having at the price. A Christian Europe capable of giving Epirus to Albania invites the contempt of every just-minded man.

The strategical flanking movement which forced the Bulgarians to abandon the Kresna Pass was more remarkable for the endurance of the troops who executed it than for the originality of its conception. It was the one and only way in which to force the defile.

I think that perhaps the finest military conception in the whole campaign was that which gave King Constantine the courage, on July 27th, to detach the 2nd and 4th Divisions to take in flank the Bulgarians attacking the 3rd and 10th Divisions on the extreme left. It was a decision such as only a brave and determined commander could make; there were so many other weaker courses that he might have adopted, but which he rejected in favour of this grandiose plan. To me at least, the movement westwards of these two divisions seems the finest strategical conception of the whole war—always excepting the masterly advance on Kilkis and Lachanas—and it should silence once and for ever the complaints of the Serbian General Staff that the Greeks devoted more energy to conquering the Ægean littoral than to co-operating with the Serbian right flank.

The little headway made by the Serbian forces in front of Kustendil and Tsarevo-Selo, to me at least, seems incomprehensible; if they could not take the Bulgarian positions they might at least have attacked with sufficient energy to prevent the Bulgarians withdrawing some of their best troops to send them against the Greeks. Perhaps in course of time some Serbian military writer will explain what at present I cannot but characterise as the laggard inactivity of the Serbian armies once they had got close up to the Bulgarian frontier.

In concluding this chapter I feel that a word of commendation is due to the Greek Press and people for the way in which they loyally supported the strategy of their King and the foreign policy of their Premier whilst the cannon still roared at the front. There was no word of criticism to be read or heard. The nation had put its trust in the men who had charge of its destinies;

with implicit and well-merited confidence in her soldiers, Hellas awaited the result. If, now that peace has come, the voice of critics is to be heard, that is only natural! All of us (myself included, who had no share in earning those great victories, or framing the foreign policy of the country) want to tell each other how much better we would have done things ourselves. It is a comparatively harmless pastime, if not carried to excess, and I am sure those we criticise are far too great-minded to grudge us our little bit of pleasurable criticism.

CHAPTER XVI

FACTS, FIGURES AND FANCIES

DURING thirty days from July 2nd, when the Greek advance began, to July 31st, when the armistice was concluded, the Greek Army knew no rest. With the exception of July 12th and 13th there was not a single day when some great battle was not in progress, or some great feat of arms was not being accomplished.

The tally of battles fought amounts to twenty-four, at least half of which were fought over the summits of mighty mountains rising 6,000 ft. toward the sky. Those mountains make fitting tombstones to mark the graves of the gallant Greek dead whose epitaph is written in blood on the stony places hitherto only known to the mountain goat, but history will keep their laurels ever green in the hearts of their countrymen.

Of 105,000 men that Greece put into the firing line some 35,000 were killed or wounded, and fully 50 per cent. of the officers were put *hors de combat*. In thirty days the Greek Army not only marched 300 kilometres, but fought almost every yard of the way against troops usually entrenched and almost invariably in superior numbers. (I compute the Bulgarian effectives at 90,000 on July 2nd, 120,000 on July 5th, reinforced on July 26th by another 40,000 entirely fresh troops.) Of these 10,000 were made prisoners, with no less than 172 cannon, and I estimate that about 43,000 were killed or wounded! Surely a remarkable feat!

The approximate positions and dates of the Greek Divisions are set out on the accompanying sketch-map, which speaks for itself of the work accomplished.

So much for the past; but what of the future? It must be clear to the meanest intellect that a nation

which can produce an army capable of such achievements, which has now the memory of those achievements with which to flatter her long-nursed ambitions, ambitions which have outlived twenty centuries of subjugation, is a nation which must be regarded seriously in the field of "Welt-Politik."

There is an old soothsaying many centuries old that Hellas would not know freedom until the advent of a King Constantine who would be crowned in Constantinople. Extravagant as this prophecy must have seemed three short years ago, it must be admitted that to-day its fulfilment is not outside the bounds of possibility. Should Balkan statesmen be wise enough to ripen into maturity the budding alliance between Greece, Serbia, Roumania and Montenegro, then without a doubt on the next occasion that the great Powers put their long outstanding differences to the arbitrament of a great European war¹ the four Balkan States will profit by the occasion to erase Bulgaria from the map, plant the cross on S^{ta} Sophia, and revoke the fatuous folly of an independent Albania. That they would be strong enough to accomplish this if disembarrassed from European interference there cannot be the least doubt, for when the newly-acquired lands have been organised and the budding commerce developed these four states will, say in 1916, be able between them to place a million and a half of trained soldiers in the field.

As to Bulgaria, as she has sown so must she reap. In a quarter of a century the word Bulgar will only be used to frighten naughty children. The nation will have ceased to exist. History alone will mention these Tartars of the Balkans on her blackest page. For the present doubtless the politicians of Sofia will nurse fond dreams of revenge, whilst they vainly endeavour to replenish their depleted exchequer. The march of civilisation is slow, but relentless. Albania and Bulgaria may for a few years defy the inevitable and resist the encroachments of the invincible invader, but sooner or later they must succumb or else change their nature—a thing which the recent campaigns in Epirus and Macedonia have shown to be impossible.

¹ These lines were written before August 1914.

As for the new Greece, the future is bright even if the present may appear somewhat embarrassed by financial weakness and doubts as to the fate of the Islands and of Epirus. I, who have seen the Greek soldier in battle, who have noted the calm determination of the people in the cities awaiting tidings from the front, who have seen rich and poor alike pour out their savings to fill the Government treasury—I have no doubts as to the future.

Salonika, the queen of the Eastern Mediterranean, will vie with Marseilles and Alexandria for first place amongst Mediterranean ports, Athens will become the Vienna of the near East, and Greece will gradually fight her way back to an honourable seat amongst the councils of the nations, with more than a geographical claim to naval power in the Mediterranean. Such is the writing on the wall as I read it.

Ere I write the word "finis" to this page I would pay a last tribute to those whose life-blood made the writing clear for man to read—those who fell in the war, many of them comrades of mine—all of them men whom I would gladly claim as such. Their epitaph is upon the mountains—"Si monumentum requiris, circumspice"—but the tale of their heroism, some little part of which I have inadequately striven to tell, remains a precious legacy not only to Greece but to all humanity; for the tale of the fight they fought against great odds, amidst terrible privations, teaches us that there is yet nobility in warfare. War, however dreadful and wasteful of life, is after all a noble thing when it calls forth such gallant, straightforward fighting as was displayed by the Greek soldiery, frequently under the most atrocious provocation. To the soldiers of Greece I spring to attention and salute; for those who, alas! have fought their last fight I bow my head: "Well done, thou brave and faithful soldier." Vale! May all be well with you.

FINIS

ENVOI TO PART II

THE CHANT OF THE "DEPHTHERA MIRARKHIA"

[The song of the 2nd (Athens) Division, known as the "Iron Division" as they marched through the Rue du Stade in close column of platoons led by their King, literally and metaphorically covered with laurels, after the conclusion of peace.]

Let others praise our glory and the colours that we bear,
Let others tell the story of the laurels that we wear;
To God we give the glory and to Him alone we sing—
To God the Lord of battles and to Constantine our King.

Ah! women, cease your weeping for those who come not back;
They fell like heroes leaping ever fiercely to attack;
Tho' no stone is erected on their shallow common pit,
'Tis on the Scroll of Glory that their epitaph is writ.

Let Time, the great magician, bring peace to riven hearts,
To peasant and patrician, but the glory ne'er departs;
The children of our children for centuries shall sing
Psalms to the God of battles and to Constantine our King.

A. H. T.

APPENDIX I

RÉSUMÉ OF EVENTS IN OTHER THEATRES OF WAR

(October 17th, 1912, to July 1st, 1913)

MACEDONIAN CAMPAIGN

October.—Advance of five Greek Divisions under the Crown Prince (now King Constantine) on Ellassona.

After the battle of Ellassona the Greeks continued their advance, fought a successful action at Selfidge for possession of the mountain pass. Moved forward to Veria.

The main Turkish army, including the Salonika garrison, were now in the vicinity of Vodina and Venidje Vardar (Yanitsa).

November.—One Greek Division moved from Selfidge toward Florina and Monastir. At Banitza this Division was attacked by some 60,000 Turks (the Army of Monastir), defeated with the loss of ten guns, and driven back to Koziani (Kozani).

The Crown Prince, having assured himself of the safety of this Division, defeated the Turks at Venidje Vardar, and the next day Salonika surrendered to the Greek Army.

Two days later the Bulgarian Rhodope Division, marching down from Strumnitza, which not having found any enemy to fight against had still managed to waste time in burning and pillaging the villages on its route, arrived in front of Salonika and demanded the surrender of the city from the Turks. What followed is told in the text.

After the fall of Salonika the Greeks swept north-westward towards Monastir, and arrived at Florina in time to hear of the capture of Monastir by the Serbians, who retook from the Turks the guns lost by the Greeks at Banitza.

From Florina the Greeks swept southward and occupied Koritza and Kastoria without any serious opposition.

The nationality of the inhabitants in that part of Macedonia

then occupied by the Greek armies may be summarised as follows:

| | | | | | |
|-------------------------|---|---|---|----|-----------|
| <i>Bona fide</i> Greeks | . | . | . | 65 | per cent. |
| „ „ Turks | . | . | . | 10 | „ „ |
| „ „ Serbs | . | . | . | 8 | „ „ |
| „ „ Bulgars | . | . | . | 2 | „ „ |
| „ „ Jews | . | . | . | 7 | „ „ |
| Forcibly Bulgarised | . | . | . | 8 | „ „ |

Meanwhile the Serbian armies, successful everywhere, had driven the remnants of the Turkish armies through Monastir southward, where they managed (under Djavid Pasha) to slip through to Koritza and Jannina before the Greek main army could bar the road.

A second Serbian army marched through Northern Albania and captured the seaports of San Juan di Medua and Durazzo; whilst a third Serbian army assisted the Montenegrins to besiege Essad Pasha (not to be confused with Essad Pasha of Yannina fame) in Scutari.

The Bulgarians, owing to the faulty Turkish mobilisation plans, had rushed the Turkish main armies down through Lue Burgas to the famous Tchataldja lines, where they were held up partly because the Turks had had time to make good their initial mobilisation mistakes and partly because of the innate fighting value of the Turk when fighting behind entrenchments. The difficulties of transport across the muddy plains of Thrace also heavily handicapped the Bulgarians.

The second Bulgarian army meanwhile laid siege to Adrianople, delivered one great assault, and was driven off with heavy losses.

On December 5th Montenegro, Serbia and Bulgaria concluded an armistice with Turkey, as they had all got to a state of stalemate. Greece alone continued the war in Epirus and the blockade by sea of the Ægean littoral.

1913

Austria having strongly protested against the Serbian occupation of seaports on the Adriatic, the Serbian troops were withdrawn from Albania. (Note the blindness of the Triple Entente Powers who backed Austria up in her protest!)

Negotiations for peace with Turkey having failed (it should be noted that Turkey had only intended to gain time), active hostilities were resumed.

The Serbians sent 40,000 troops and heavy guns to assist

the Bulgarians in achieving the fall of Adrianople. Jannina fell to the Greeks and Scutari to the joint Serbian and Montenegrin armies.

Austria again protested against the occupation of Scutari by the Balkan allies, and again the Triple Entente Powers gave way. Italy protested against the occupation of Northern Epirus by the Greeks, and again the Triple Entente Powers gave way.

By the Treaty of London Greece was to lose Northern Epirus, Serbia Northern Albania, and Montenegro Scutari. A new Principality, Albania, was to be formed, with Scutari as its capital, heaven knows who as its ruler, and a mixed international commission to keep the peace and watch over the petty (very petty) cash.

Meanwhile Bulgaria had been unable to force the Tchataldja lines. Bulgarian troops were withdrawn from Southern Macedonia (Salonika, Serres and the Chalkidiki peninsula) to move against Tchataldja. As the Bulgarians moved out eastward the Greeks moved in from the west and occupied the Pangheion region and the Chalkidiki Peninsula, almost exclusively inhabited by Greek populations.

In several places Greek and Bulgarian troops were in joint occupation (*e.g.* Salonika and Serres). In April the friction between Bulgaria and her allies became intense. After various "incidents" a neutral zone was established, and finally war supervened.

Meanwhile the Greeks offered Bulgaria to send 40,000 men to turn the Turkish lines by landing in the Gulf of Saros (NOT, *be it noted*, ON THE GALLIPOLI PENINSULA! The Greeks were too well informed to attempt that venture). The offer was refused through jealousy.

Any account of the Balkan campaign 1912-1913 which did not render full justice to the Greek Fleet would fail lamentably to justly appreciate the lessons of the war. I do not propose to recapitulate the naval history of the campaign: suffice it to say that the Greek navy was ready for sea, that it seized the initiative, gained command of the sea and maintained that command until the close of the war.

It was the sea power exerted by the diminutive Greek Fleet which was responsible for the hopeless collapse of the Turkish mobilisation arrangements. It was sea power which converted Salonika into a Greek base, and it was sea power which held the reorganised Turkish army in February 1913 to the Tchataldja lines instead of marching to the relief of Adrianople.

So soon as that sea power was removed, in July 1913, the

Turkish army marched forward and retook Adrianople without the least trouble, since the Turks had nothing to fear from their lines of communication. It was sea power that gave the islands of the *Ægean* back to Greece.

Sea power *based in the Ægean* holds the key to Turkey and the whole Levant.

APPENDIX II

MILITARY LESSONS OF THE TWO WARS¹

(For Military Students only)

THE TURKISH ARMY

THE collapse of the Turkish armies in the autumn of 1912 may be attributed to the following causes:

1. The Turks did not believe in the danger of immediate war, and disbanded their third-year men five days before the declaration of war.

2. The inclusion of Christians and conscripts of non-Turkish nationality in the Turkish army.

3. The faulty mobilisation scheme, which provided for the completion of Nizam (active army) cadres by sending drafts to a great distance instead of territorially. Our Regular Army would experience much the same contretemps: for instance a battalion on service in Malta would have to obtain its mobilisation drafts from Scotland or Ireland perhaps.

4. The failure of the Turkish fleet to hold the sea and thus secure transport of men and material across the Ægean from the mobilisation centres in Asia Minor.

5. The prevalence of political intrigue amongst the officers, which in some cases even extended to the rank and file, and enabled a junior officer to exercise more influence both inside and outside his unit than the commanding officer.

6. The Redif (reserve divisions) consisted of untrained troops commanded by untrained officers. These were mobilised territorially; but owing to the fact that a large percentage of the effectives belonged to alien races, nearly half of the men in European Turkey failed to mobilise. (The 23rd Redif Division, drawn from Yannina, Valona and Epirus

¹ Sources of information: Essad Pasha and Turkish staff officers: King Constantine, Greek Staff Officers and Generals: Colonel Vassitch, ex-Serbian Minister of War and Military Envoy Extraordinary with the Greek Army. General Hessaptchieff, Bulgarian Envoy Extraordinary with the Greek Army and brother-in-law of the Bulgarian Premier

with a paper strength of 12,000, never numbered more than 6,000.)

7. The failure of the Turkish General Staff to concentrate its available forces on sound strategical lines.

Note.—The Turks in fact repeated the same faults which the French committed in 1870. Unmobilised and incomplete units were sent to the front and ordered to undertake offensive action. They came into immediate contact with troops who had completed their mobilisation. Trains and transport columns which should have been devoted exclusively to supplying the troops with ammunition and food were occupied instead with forwarding the mobilisation men and matériel, with the result that, once the war had commenced, the incomplete Turkish cadres were receiving mobilisation stores when they should have been receiving food and ammunition. The effect of this was that the Turkish troops, starved and ill-supplied with ammunition, were unable to protect a transport service which brought them nothing of which they stood in need. Supplies of clothing would arrive instead of the food so urgently required; the transport columns which should have been functioning as ammunition trains were engaged in carrying recruits and reservists to join their units on the field of battle.

Had the Turks been content to act upon the defensive until their mobilisation had been completed; had they abandoned Adrianople to a siege and fallen back at once behind the Chataldja lines, they would have been able to have completed their mobilisation without losing practically the whole of their road transport. The speed and efficiency with which in July 1913 the Turks marched on Adrianople bears out this contention.

FIGHTING VALUE OF THE TURK

Once the Turkish Army recovered from the hopeless muddle occasioned by its initial faults of organisation, mobilisation and strategical conception, once it had shed all the rabble of unwilling combatants that had been roped into the recruiting net, it gave ample evidence of its old dogged fighting power. The Chataldja lines were never forced. The Adrianople garrison only surrendered when food and ammunition ran out. Scutari was surrendered by treaty rather than by compulsion, and doubtless because Essad Pasha, being an Albanian, was more anxious to retain the services of his army for future use in Albania than to hold Scutari for Turkey. Yannina, commanded by the other Essad Pasha, held out to

the last possible moment, and had it not been for the brilliant strategical conception of the Greek staff it is probable that the half-starved garrison would have held out until hunger compelled capitulation.

But if the Turk showed those sterling fighting qualities for which he has been so justly reputed for centuries, he also showed the same military faults which he had shown in previous campaigns. Everything tends to show that in modern warfare victory favours the more energetic commander. The Turk is slow to move either in advance or in retreat, and time and time again during the war his unaccountable slowness cost him dear. He did not begin to retreat until it was too late to retire without disaster, whilst time and time again he failed to advance until the psychological moment was past. On December 17th at Manoliassa in Epirus the road lay open to a vigorous Turkish advance; on the 18th it was already too late.

TACTICS, ETC.

The fondness displayed by the Turk for disjointed night attacks is unaccountable. On no occasion did they meet with any measure of success, although these attacks invariably proved costly in life. As a rule these enterprises were carried out without sufficient preparation and without any scheme of ultimate co-operation.

The artillery (armed with Krupp guns) proved themselves accurate shots, but failed entirely in their selection of targets. Often they would concentrate upon what they believed to be a target, and continue firing upon it for hours. Their system of direct fire exposed them to very heavy losses in men and matériel when opposed to the Greek gunners, who almost invariably employed indirect fire. The personnel who manned the guns of the Yannina defences was completely changed no less than three times during the twelve weeks they were subjected to the Greek fire, and out of 1,200 gunners only 107 remained to serve their guns the day the fortress surrendered. The courage shown by the Turkish artillery when under fire was extraordinary. I have watched a duel which lasted a whole morning between opposing artillery. The Greeks had eight 5-inch and four 6-inch guns firing indirect at 5,500 yards, and one Q.F. field battery of four guns also firing indirect at 3,800 yards against one Turkish Krupp field battery of four guns (old pattern) firing direct from a concrete redan. The Greek heavy guns were firing with percussion in salvoes, six guns at a time, the Q.F. battery

with Armstrongite. The smoke, fumes and flying débris about the Turkish battery made it impossible to see the effects of the Greek fire (which I was observing from the observatory of the Greek Q.F. battery at a distance of 3,650 yards), but throughout the morning one Turkish gun continued to reply. I was subsequently told by the Turkish commander that that gun was served by an officer and two men, the whole of the remaining personnel of the battery having been wiped out.

The work of the Turkish engineers was primitive. Their shelter trenches were not scientifically constructed, and were innocent of traverses or head cover. In their wire entanglements all the wires were drawn taut. Dummy trenches were seldom traced. The unsanitary condition of the trenches was lamentable, and even soak-pits were not utilised. (This at a time when an average week yielded 4 inches of rain.)

The Turkish medical service was practically non-existent; the only attempt to deal with the sick and wounded was in the hospitals, which were really more like mortuaries than hospitals. To this callous disregard for the welfare of the sick and wounded must be attributed the large percentage of deaths from wounds and disease. To all intents and purposes a sick or wounded Turk was a dead man. When the Greek Army entered Yannina they took over 7,000 patients, the majority of whom were in a dying condition.

THE BULGARIAN ARMY

The Bulgarian nation is almost entirely composed of agriculturists, and the army reflects the good and bad points of the nation. Ignorant, uneducated, inured to suffering, the Bulgarian peasant is by race a Tartar, who retains most of his racial characteristics. He is robust and heavily built, slow of movement and of thought. Accustomed to submit to the most tyrannical discipline, he passes on with interest the indignities he has suffered from the hands of his own officers to those whom the fortunes of war have placed at his mercy. On parade, the Bulgarian soldier shows up well. He has a slow but martial step, holds himself erect, and takes a pride in keeping his accoutrements clean. Once released from the bonds of discipline, a revulsion sets in, and no remaining vestige of martial bearing is to be found in the Bulgarian soldier pillaging a village or wreaking his vengeance upon civilian inhabitants—even when the inhabitants profess his own nationality and religion. The Bulgarian soldier is stolid, patient and long-suffering, and submits to any indignity from his officers.

The Bulgarian officers are drawn from the well-to-do farmer classes, and from the partially educated bureaucracy of Government employees. They are extremely jealous of the authority with which they are invested; tyrannical with their men, they have no camaraderie amongst themselves. They look upon their commission as an employment of profit under the Crown rather than as an honourable profession. I know of no single instance in which a Bulgarian officer considered the welfare of his men or the interests of the cause he served in preference to his own desires or interests, nor have I ever heard a Bulgarian soldier say a good word for his officers.

The collapse of the Bulgarian armies in the second campaign is to be attributed to the following principal factors:

1. During the war against Turkey the Bulgarian Government Press Bureau had so skilfully manipulated the national and international press that not only had it succeeded in making Europe believe in the Bulgarian army, but the Bulgarian army was puffed up with an excessive pride and confidence in its own advertised efficiency.

2. The leaders of this campaign of publicity and the senior Bulgarian officers had begun to really believe the statements they had originally made for advertising purposes. They hopelessly overestimated their own efficiency, and failed to appreciate the good points of their adversaries. On parade the Bulgarian shows up well, whilst the Greek presents a slovenly appearance; the Bulgarians did not look deeper than this parade appearance, and conceived a totally erroneous contempt for the Greek soldiery, a contempt which was perhaps fomented by familiarity when the two armies were in joint occupation of Salonika.

3. In action the Bulgarian was always obsessed by an exaggerated fear of being outflanked.

4. The Bulgarian is essentially cunning and sly, but, like all people of similar temperament, he never gave his adversaries credit for similar qualities. Having conceived a plan, he looked upon its success as a foregone conclusion, and failed to make adequate preparation in the event of a reverse.

5. The chief blame for the collapse of the Bulgarian armies must be placed upon Generals Ivanoff and Hessaptchieff, who from the outset looked upon a sweeping success as a certainty, and who had made no preparations for other than an offensive campaign. The Greek armies never gave their enemy time to repair their initial mistake or breathing-space wherein to reorganise their shattered armies.

6. The Bulgarian general officers showed themselves in-

capable (probably through mutual jealousies) of mutual support or combined effort. The combined general advance which had been secretly ordered to take place all along the line on July 2nd (see General Army Order captured by the Greeks at Kilkis) was commenced piecemeal by some columns on the night of June 29th to 30th, and the blame for this action must lie with the Bulgarian column commanders, who anticipated their orders by seventy-two hours, attacked the Greeks at Ghevgheli, Nigritta and in the Pangheion region, either from a mistaken idea of getting ahead of their comrades commanding other columns, or else in a fit of eagerness to get at their enemy.

These isolated attacks may, however, have been carried out under secret orders from Sofia, in the hope that the Greeks would not strike back, but accept them in the same spirit of meek protest with which they had treated similar attacks by the Bulgarians upon their outposts at Nigritta and in the Pangheion in April and May. If this was so, then the blame lies not with the Bulgarian military commanders, but with their political men, who failed to realise that the Greeks had reached the limit of their patience and would not tolerate another "incident." As events fell out, however, the attack of these three columns not only warned the Greeks to be upon their guard, but committed the columns concerned to a forward movement which the rest of the Bulgarian army was not prepared to support until July 2nd. On that day the Greeks were not only ready but commenced a forward movement themselves, thus anticipating by a matter of about three hours only the Bulgarian initiative, and so it was the Bulgarians and not the Greeks who were caught unprepared, and the Bulgars were hoist with their own petard. Had there been no "incidents" at Ghevgheli, Nigritta and Pangheion on June 29th and 30th, it is more than probable that the secret Bulgarian concentration would have passed unnoticed and the general advance on July 2nd, as planned, would have carried the Bulgars treacherously victorious into Salonika. Their fault, as indeed throughout the campaign, lay in trying to be too cunning. "*L'on peut être plus fin qu'un autre, mais pas plus fin que tous les autres.*"

THE GREEK ARMY

The Greeks owe their successes to the following factors :

1. Command of the sea.
2. The superior strategical and tactical skill of their most senior officers, especially those of the General Staff.

3. The fine way in which their artillery was handled.
4. And above all to the individual endurance and patriotism of the private soldiers, and to their individual intelligence.

In a lecture delivered at the Parnassus in Athens in the presence of King Constantine the author touched upon the chief faults which he had noticed in the Greek Army during the two campaigns, and His Majesty fully concurred in the criticisms then made. Since these faults have since been remedied to a great extent by recent reforms, no good object would be served in again drawing attention to them, more especially since such details might under certain circumstances be of utility to the enemies of Greece.

There is every reason to believe that the Greek General Staff have taken to heart the teachings of the two recent campaigns.

THE MILITARY EFFECT OF MASSACRES, ETC.

One cannot expect the Bulgar or Turk to observe the ethics of warfare if there is anything to be gained by their non-observance. When at Servidge and throughout Epirus the Turks permitted the Albanians to commit excesses upon the civil population it was doubtless with the end in view of terrorising these to take no part in the war, and also to impress upon them the horrors of war, so that once the campaign was concluded there would be no fear of local risings for a generation at least. When the Turks discovered they were fighting a lost cause these atrocities ceased save in a few isolated cases. If the atrocities perpetrated early in the campaign were done with the connivance of the Turkish authorities they were done with a definite political and military object in view, and although they cannot be condoned on humanitarian grounds, there is some excuse for them on military grounds. War, after all, cannot be waged with bloodless hands.

It is also conceivable that the Bulgarians had a definite reason for the wholesale butchery of civilian inhabitants to which they invariably resorted when the opportunity occurred. But their reason was not a military one—it was purely political, and was the logical continuation of the policy carried out by the bands of Bulgarian Comitadjis in Macedonia during the past twenty years.

The situation presented itself thus to the Bulgarian mind. Here was a country (Macedonia and Thrace) with a population of nearly 5,000,000, of whom only some 200,000 were bona-fide Bulgarians and 300,000 had been "Bulgarised" during the past twenty years by the Bulgarian Comitadjis.

During the period October 1912 to July 1913 they were masters of the greater portion of this territory. Those who embraced the Exarchate religion, the Bulgarian language and nationality, were left comparatively unmolested, whilst every means was used to rid the country of the remainder, so that in another generation the surviving population would be exclusively Bulgarian. It was for this reason that men who refused to quit the country were made away with; whilst, so at least I was told by a Bulgarian officer, the outrages committed upon the women were for the purpose of making good the wastage of the population.

Unfortunately for the Bulgarians, the fury aroused in the Greek army by these deeds of shame made the men "see red" when they went into battle, and the Bulgarian troops could not withstand the élan of troops who had such deeds to avenge. Again, the after effects of the Bulgarian massacres are still being felt in diplomatic circles in Sofia, for the Turks, who were the chief sufferers (the loss of life on the part of the civilian Turkish population in Macedonia and Thrace during the ten months has been computed at anything varying between 200,000 and 450,000) cannot easily forget their sufferings and will be loath to enter into any alliance with Bulgaria.

PERSONAL NOTES BY THE AUTHOR

THE SPITZER BULLET.—The effect of spitzer bullets at ranges under 400 yards is negligible. The bullet cauterises the wound, and unless the heart is perforated the man hit is seldom any the worse. The bullet usually ricochets off the upper part of the head. The most damage is done when the bullet strikes the hand. At least 70 per cent. of the men subjected to spitzer bullet fire at short range, who were placed *hors de combat*, were wounded in left hand or right elbow.

EFFECTIVE ARTILLERY FIRE.—The result of ineffective artillery fire tends to greatly augment the morale of the troops fired upon. Except when a direct target was offered to view, artillery fire at anything in excess of 2,500 yards had very little result either in casualties or in adversely affecting the morale of the troops under fire.

RESERVES.—Time and time again the Greeks took the risk of placing all their troops in the firing line and pressing home the attack without any reserves. Had they met with a local reverse along the extended front over which the battles were fought (twenty miles or so) it was contended

that before the enemy could have profited by their success a rapid Greek retreat on the part of the troops cut off could have re-established touch with the main battle line.

ARTILLERY PREPARATION.—At Kilkis, rather than waste time in establishing a superiority of artillery fire, the Greek infantry pushed on, and the rapidity of their advance was such that the Bulgarian artillery could seldom get the correct ranges, and were forced themselves to continually change positions.

NIGHT ATTACKS.—Ample proof was given of the axiom that night attacks should not be undertaken save by troops who have been very highly trained, and then only after most careful preparation and with a very definite object in view.

RAPIDITY IN PURSUIT.—On the few occasions when the Greeks delayed even for an hour or two their tactical advance for strategical reasons, they had cause to regret the delay. An enemy, even if routed, will turn at bay if given the least respite. In such cases a movement threatening to cut off the fugitives is infinitely more effective and speedy than a direct pursuit.

TRANSPORT.—As regards transport, motor lorries are infinitely preferable to horsed vehicles, even when roads are bad or practically non-existent. From Doyran to the Struma valley there was no road save a mule track before the war, yet one-half of the Greek motor transport passed over this country, cutting its own road for a distance of about sixty miles, which distance was accomplished in thirty-six hours.

COMPRESSED RATIONS.—A very strong case is made out for some form of compressed ration such as McDoddie, the use of which enables a man to carry five days' food in his pocket. The rapidity with which troops are called upon to advance after a victorious engagement does not permit of the transport supplying the men with food. The train is obliged to strain its resources to the utmost to replenish the ammunition of the army. For such eventualities (three days of battle and two days of pursuit) each soldier should carry five days' food as an emergency ration.

AMBULANCES AND ROCKETS.—The use of motor ambulances is essential. Comfort should be sacrificed to carrying capacity; it is more urgent that a wounded man should be speedily transported to where his wounds can be attended to, than that he should perform the journey in exaggerated luxury and be spared an hour's extra

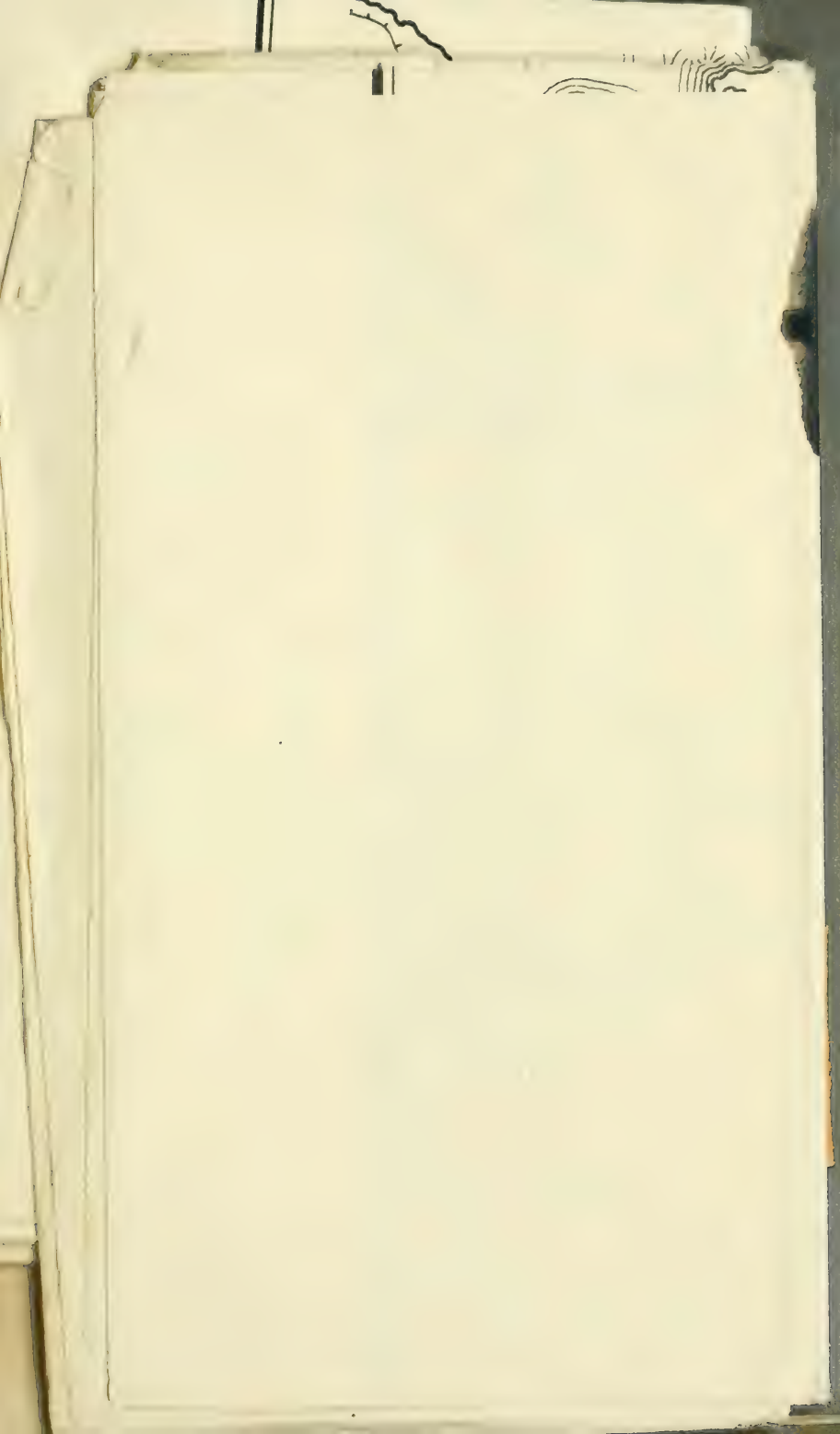
suffering. The use of rockets at night to show the position of a dressing station would save many lives, especially after a severe engagement over broken ground.

CHOLERA INOCULATION.—Before the second campaign the whole of the Greek army was inoculated against cholera, and the most satisfactory results were obtained. Although some 1,500 men contracted the disease, those who had been inoculated invariably made very swift recoveries, in many cases being back in the firing line in four or five days. It was only in those cases where a man had failed to be inoculated that the case proved fatal. The Serbians are said to have lost over 4,500 men from cholera, although they did not, like the Greeks, advance through a cholera-tainted country, whilst the Bulgarians are said to have lost 12,000 dead from cholera.

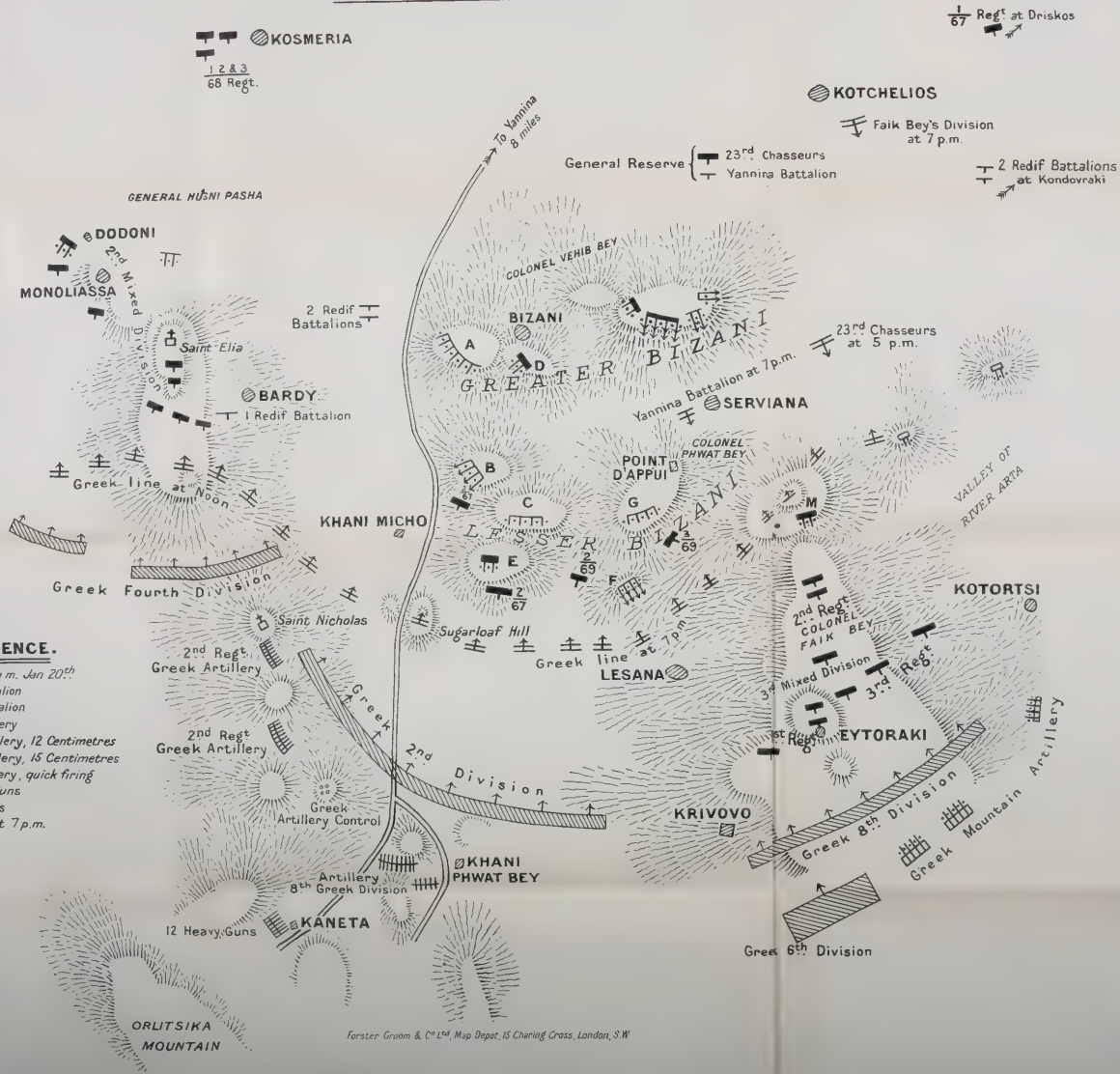
TENTE D'ABRIS.—The *tente d'abris*, carried in sections, in use in all the Balkan armies, is perhaps the most serviceable item of equipment carried by any foreign army. The author spent the whole of the winter of 1912-1913 under a *tente d'abris* on a mountain side at an altitude of some 5,000 ft., and testifies with feeling on the subject.

MACHINE GUNS AND GRENADES.—The machine gun is obviously *the* weapon of the future: in the opinion of the author the next war between first-class military powers will establish the vast superiority of the machine gunner over the rifleman, both as regards accuracy and control of fire. A time may yet come when infantry as such will cease to exist. The battalion will be armed with machine guns for long-distance fighting and cutlasses and hand grenades for close work.





GENERAL MAP, January 20th 1913.



KOSMERIA
 1, 2 & 3
 68 Regt.

1/67 Regt at Driskos

KOTCHELIOS

Faik Bey's Division
 at 7 p.m.

General Reserve (
 23rd Chasseurs
 Yannina Battalion

2 Redif Battalions
 at Kondovraki

GENERAL HUSNI PASHA

DODONI
 MONOLIASSA
 2nd Mixed Division

2 Redif Battalions

Saint Elia

BARDY
 1 Redif Battalion

Greek line at Noon

KHANI MICHIO

Greek Fourth Division

2nd Regt
 Greek Artillery

2nd Regt
 Greek Artillery

Saint Nicholas
 Greek Artillery Control

KHANI
 PHWAT BEY

12 Heavy Guns

KANETA

ORLITSIKA MOUNTAIN

Forster Groom & Co Ltd, Map Depot, 15 Charing Cross, London, S.W.

REFERENCE.

- Turkish positions 8 a.m. Jan 20th
- Nizam Battalion
 - Redif Battalion
 - Field Artillery
 - Heavy Artillery, 12 Centimetres
 - Heavy Artillery, 15 Centimetres
 - Field Artillery, quick firing
 - Mountain guns
 - Greeks' guns
 - Positions at 7 p.m.



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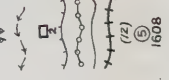
GENERAL MAP, PART 2, MACEDONIAN CAMPAIGN.



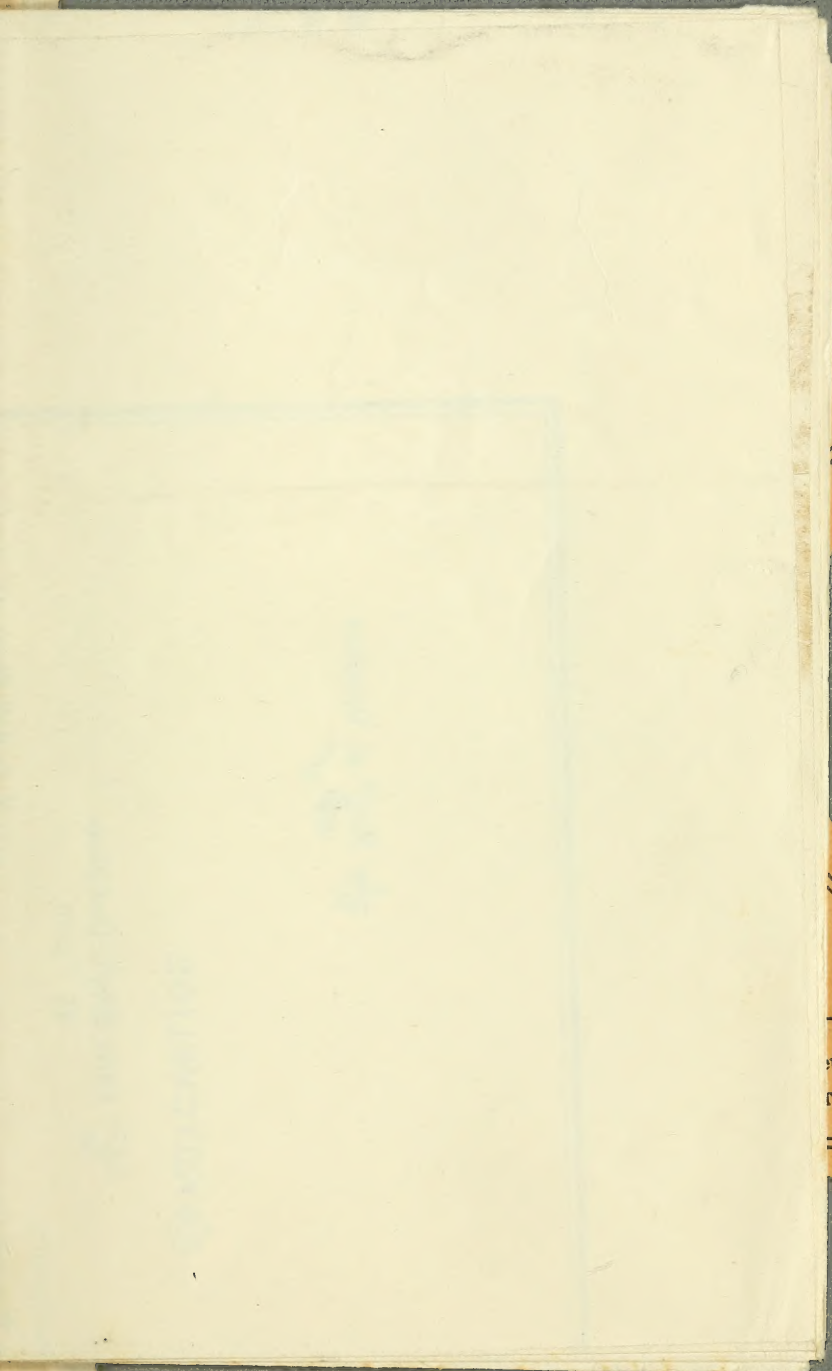
SCALE OF KILOMETRES.
 0 5 10 15 20 25
 SCALE 1:1=400,000

REFERENCE.
 Mountains over 1000 metres
 King's Headquarters 29th June (K.S.)
 Line of Greek Army 29th June (K.S.)

- " " " 15th July
- " " " 21st July
- " " " 27th July
- " " " 31st July
- Battles
- Some journeys of flatter off the main roads
- Greek Divisions
- First Class Roads
- Second Class Roads
- Paths
- Railways
- Distances in kilometres
- Hours of march
- Heights in metres



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TED

GENERAL MAP OF THE THEATRE OF WAR.

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393156

HMod Trapman, Albert H.
T7731g The Greeks triumphant.

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